PRIVATE EYE

60p

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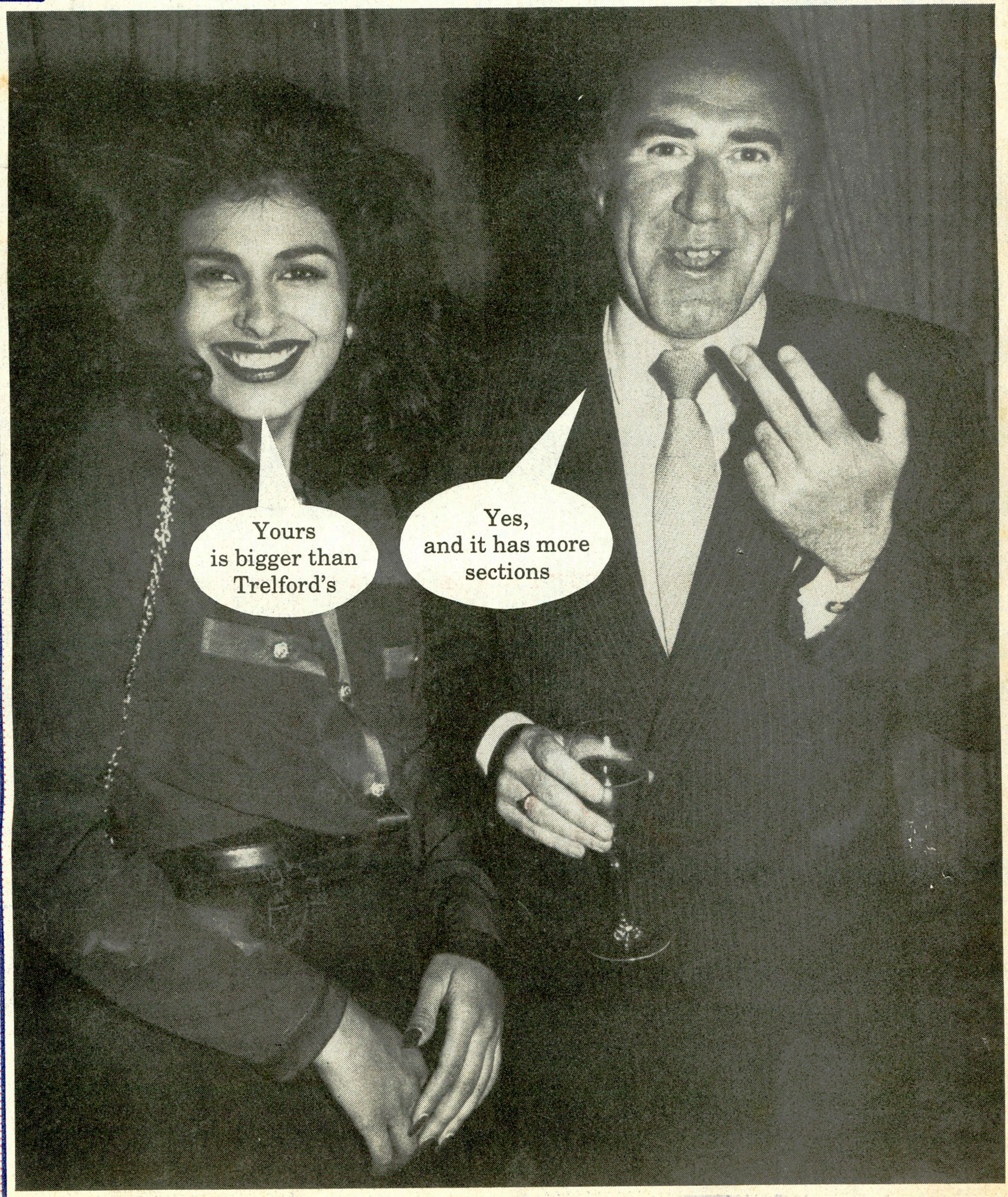
Friday
2 Feb. '90

EDITOR IN LIBEL SHOCKER



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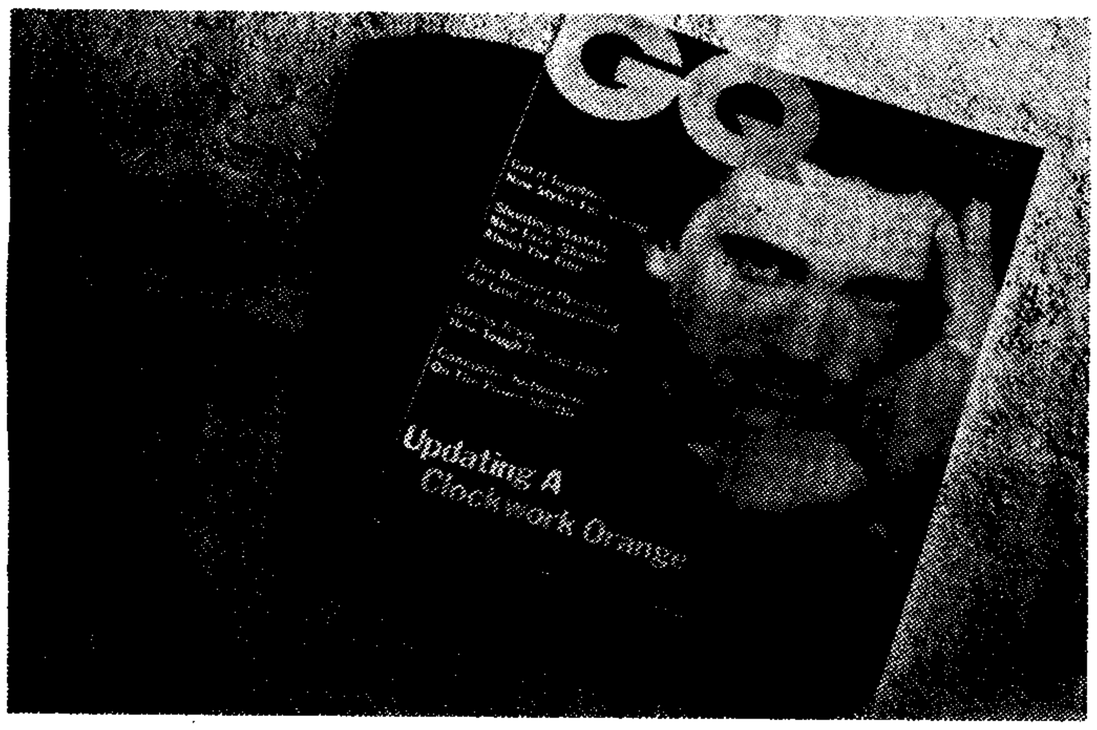
FORGET COCAINE. IT'S SPEED MOST PROMINENT BUSINESSMEN ARE ADDICTED TO.



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THE MALT.

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Gnome

A statement from Lord Gnome, Chairman of Gnomaphone (Mobile Phones) plc, as dictated to E. Strobes from his car.

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[There was then another short interval of 17 hours before Lord Gnome walked into the office to finish the statement.]

All in all, the complaints about the Gnomaphone have been little more than scare stories. Anyone who feels they have a genuine grievance should call my solicitors, Sue Grabbit & Runne on their car number: 0860 33625. That should put the matter straight.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
Gnome House
London

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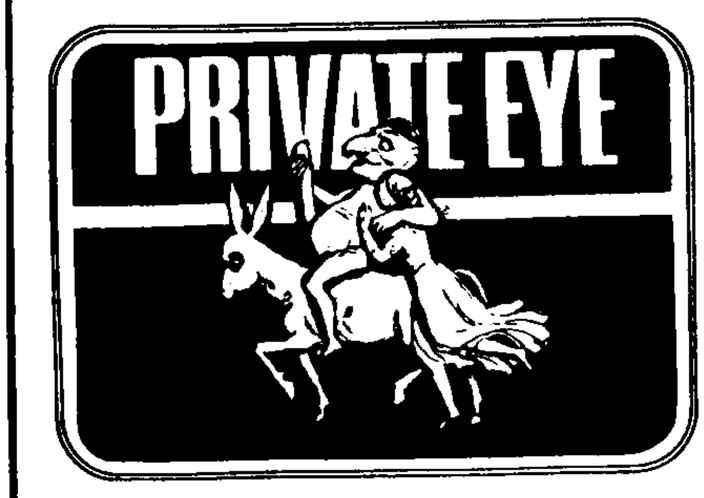


COLOUR SECTION

HOME secretary David Noddington (the nickname derives from his habit of nodding every time a senior policeman or judge asks him to do anything), is hoping his prompt rejection of the latest submission from the former deputy chief constable of Greater Manchester police, John Stalker, will ensure that the Stalker case vanishes forever from the public prints. This is, however, unlikely, if only for the large number of legal cases which are to follow the discredited prosecution of Stalker's friend Kevin Taylor.

First in the lists, in front of Mr Justice Sachs (he tried the Taylor case), will be DI Stephenson and DS Keith Ware of Manchester CID. They will answer chargest arising from their evidence in the Taylor case.

At about the same time their former boss, former detective chief superintendent Peter Topping, appears at the Old Bailey also charged in connection with certain remarks made in his recent memoirs about Kevin Taylor and others.

Following close behind these cases, a volley of writs will be launched at Manchester police and more crucially at the Co-Op bank from lawyers acting for the defendants in the Taylor case. Kevin Taylor himself is considering a writ for malicious prosecution against the police. If that proceeds, the theory that the police case against him was a device to smear Stalker, who was taken off his shoot-to-kill investigation in Ulster, will be fully tested.

The writs against the bank arise from the indignation felt by the defendants that confidential matters between themselves and the bank were freely divulged by junior officials, even where they were not compelled to give the information. Mr Terry Bowley, a senior manager at the bank who has already won a case for unfair dismissal against the bank and who stood trial alongside Taylor, is said to be especially aggrieved about the behaviour of former colleagues who believed everything the police told them, even though the bank's own investigations showed there was nothing wrong with the Taylor deals.

The power of discovery and the ability to call witnesses in all these cases is likely to shed a lot of new light on the Stalker affair — so much so that many may be settled on astonishingly handsome terms before they come to court.

THE JOY over the Government's defeat on football identity cards may lull the football authorities into believing they can go on doing nothing about football grounds, whatever Lord Justice Taylor may say. The danger of this comes out very clearly from a full report submitted to the *Eye* about the derby match between Middlesbrough and Leeds at Ayresome Park, Middlesbrough, on 9 December.

It was an all-ticket match and Leeds fans were allocated 2,100 tickets in the south-east corner terrace. The police were determined to keep fans hemmed in this corner even though, as always happens, large numbers of Leeds fans had bought tickets for the "home" terraces.

After the game started, therefore, police began to herd Leeds fans away from the empty north-east corner to the crowded south-east corner. At the same time police outside the ground decided to more than 300 ticketless fans into the crowded south-east corner too.

The situation in the crowded terrace became desperate. A fan reports: "I have stood on a full Elland Road Kop, even a full Leppings Lane terrace at Hillsborough, and can safely say that the south-east terrace was already more dangerous than either and getting worse by the minute."

Just as at Hillsborough, fans were being crushed against the perimeter fencing. Police in front were helping men, women and children over the fence, while at the rear their colleagues were ushering more and more fans into the area. Catastrophe was only avoided when Leeds fans, against the advice of the police, forced their way to the empty north-east corner.

The episode — which was entirely unreported — shows how public anguish at disasters and high court judges' recommendations serve no purpose whatever while football clubs and police continue to treat fans like cattle.

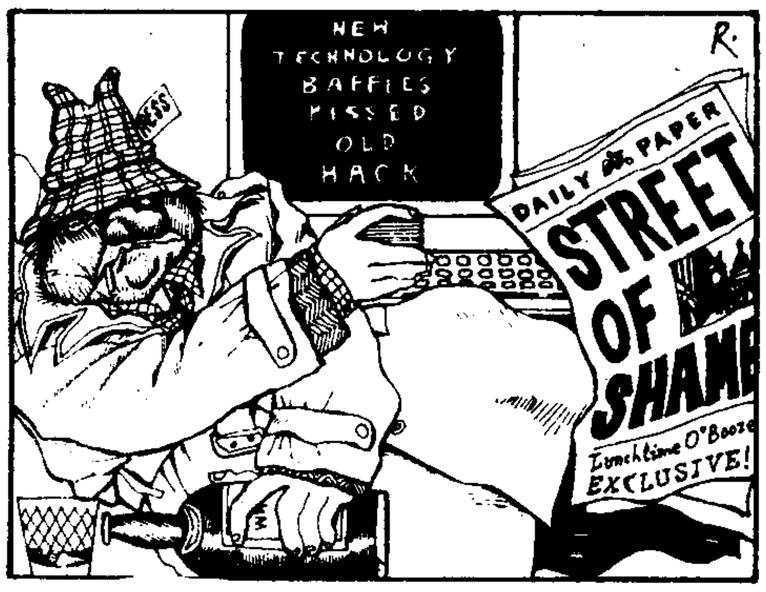
THE RECENT storms exposed even more effectively than the *Eye* the grim effects of shortages in the London Fire Brigade. Assurances from the chief fire officer after recent *Eye* articles, for example, that the closure of the Stratford control centre would make no difference in emergencies was soon put to flight.

At the height of the recent storm the number of calls to the two remaining control centres — Wembley and Croydon — more than doubled. Many were unanswered or met by the engaged tone. In some cases, British Telecom operators dealing with 999 calls asked for details of the emergencies and passed them on as the control lines cleared. *Thus British Telecom operators had to judge the relevant importance of emergencies.*

In the meantime London firemen are trying to work out what their chief officer means when he says fire brigade staff will be increased by 25. They are aware, of course, that crews per fire engine in all London stations have been cut from 18 to 16, with threats of more cuts to come. The total of cut jobs comes, they reckon, to rather more than 25, and they wonder if their chief is engaging in the old trick of taking on a few men with one hand, and laying off rather more with the other.

Thanks, too, to the firemen who have contacted the *Eye* with examples of the wasteful deployment of fire engines at London Underground stations (see last *Eye*). There was glorious chaos on 23 January when no fewer than 12 engines attended two (bogus) reports of fire in tunnels between Green Park and Victoria. While the 12 engines were doing nothing, a serious 12-pump fire broke out in the basement of the Dorchester Hotel. Somehow, an engine was found to attend the fire.

"I'm afraid I've sold the exclusive story to the Bible"



READERS of the *Sunday Times*, the *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Observer* who turned to their papers last weekend expecting reports of the most publicised court case of the week — that between Messrs Neill and Worsthorne — would have been bitterly disappointed; not a dicky-bird appeared.

Since the editors of the *Sunset Times* and the *Telegraph* are actually parties to the case, their refusal to cover the story is at least understandable, if cowardly. But what of the *Observer*, which is not involved in the action at all?

The paper certainly sent a hack to cover the trial — foghorn-voiced John Sweeney, who was reprimanded by Mr Justice Michael Davies for making too much noise in court. But Sweeney's report mysteriously failed to appear.

Presumably this has nothing at all to do with the embarrassing references made in court to the man whom Pamella called her little Pixie — *Observer* editor Donald Trelford.

STEPHEN Glover, saturnine editor of the *Indescribablyboring on Sunday*, had a stirring message for his readers in last weekend's inaugural issue. The *Sindie*, he promised, "will not recycle bogus speculation". It would be "ruthless, when necessary, in pursuing the truth".

An example of this fearless approach could be found in the very same issue: an article by ubiquitous pundit John Lloyd on (yawn) the *New Statesman and Society*.

This feature first appeared in a *Sindie* dummy a couple of weeks earlier, under the heading "What's the Use of the New Statesman?" Lloyd, himself a former editor of the Staggers, laid into the mag mercilessly.

A copy of the dummy reached the *Statesman*, whose deputy editor rang Lloyd in hurt tones to point out that Lloyd himself still writes for the *NSS* and has never mentioned any of his grievances there. A chastened Lloyd apologised and said he would tone the article down — which he duly did.

Thus the dummy version described Duncan Campbell as "ruthless and ultimately an enigma"; by last Sunday this had become "Duncan Campbell's investigations were of value, and the result of hard work and thought". All sorts of other *NSS* writers, who had not been mentioned in the first version, were now singled out for similar praise. And several new paragraphs were added to emphasise that, although the *Statesman* might have been Spartish in the past, "it has now junked much of that baggage". This was quite a change from the original piece, where Lloyd dismissed the *NSS* as a hopeless case. In the Mark Two version he wrote that "the *NSS* will survive, and now has found a job to do". Just like the dear old *Sindie*, really.

ROBERT Maxwell's mental condition is more unstable than ever following the leaking of a secret report showing that morale at Mirror Group Newspapers is at rock bottom — and that he is to blame.

The 45-page report was prepared by Capstan Centre, an independent consultancy firm, at the behest of Ian McGuinness, the Mirror Group's personnel officer (or "Human Resources Officer" as they're known in the Maxwell empire). It was based on replies to long questionnaires sent out to all their *Mirror* employees last year asking whether they were happy in their work.

It had originally been assumed that the survey would be published. Certainly Capstan Centre thought so: "It seems reasonable that if someone takes the time and effort to complete a questionnaire, they should receive at least an outline of the results," it recommended. But the results were so damning that Maxwell ordered the document to be suppressed; only board members were allowed to see it. Now, much to the Cap'n Bob's rage, a copy has found its way to the Sogat clerical chapel at the *Mirror*.

It is easy to see why the fat man was so desperate for it not to get out. The report describes MGN staff as "an army out of step with its commander". One employee is quoted as saying that Maxwell's management is effective "just as Attila the Hun was effective". Staff at the *Mirror* feel "they are working for a poorer quality, 'downmarket' newspaper". They feel "deprived and somewhat confused", with an attitude of "resignation or festering resentment".

Departmental managers are not to blame, the report adds, since staff realise that "they have very little power and are likely to have any decision overridden at the 'whim' of the Publisher" (ie, Cap'n Bob). Employees also believe that "decisions are made more for the personal reasons of the Publisher rather than the benefit of the newspaper group as a whole... A commonly expressed feeling was that the people currently running Mirror Group Newspapers do not really understand the newspaper business".

Many respondents were sceptical about the value of the questionnaire. "They thought it was a waste of time. They felt that the views of the Publisher are the only ones that will be taken into account and that their concerns, which are at the base of their low morale, will be largely ignored." The report quotes a number of comments from staff which, it says, are "representative of respondents' views":

"Our experience of Robert Maxwell gives us complete distrust of anything he is connected with as his past record will prove."

"If you believe what Maxwell says you believe in fairy tales."

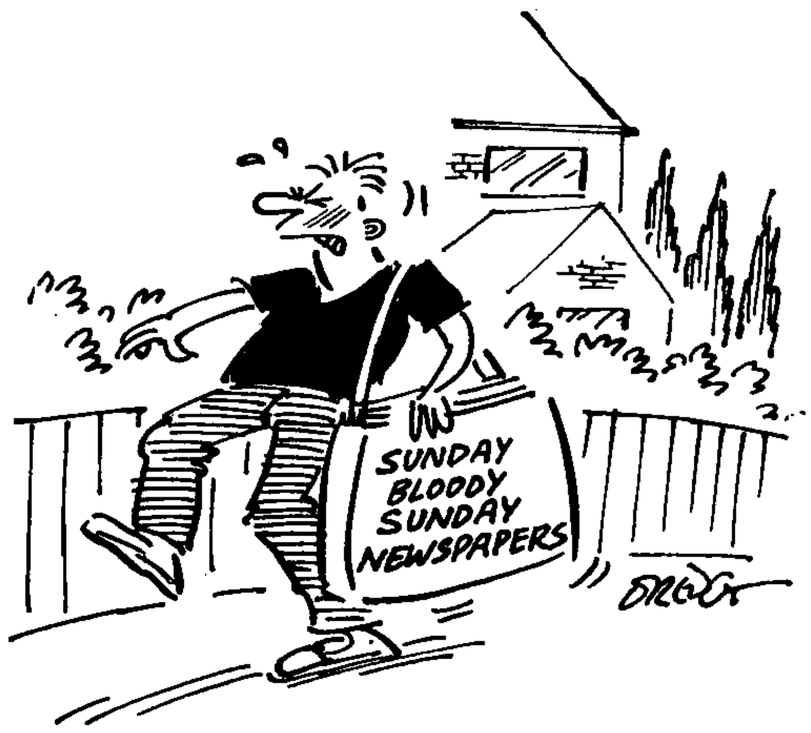
"I am sorry to say this survey will have no effect on the way Maxwell/MGN treats the people who make his/its £1m a week profit, so it's a complete waste of time. But I could win the pools next week — couldn't I?"

"THIS SURVEY IS A WASTE OF TIME. NOTHING WILL CHANGE THE FACT THAT MAXWELL WILL RULE BY *FEAR*!!!"

Ian McGuinness, the man whose bright idea this survey was, left Cap'n Bob's employment shortly before Christmas.

CONRAD BLACK aka the Montreal Moosehead, already unhappy over his public row with former *Telegraph* chief executive Andrew Knight, must be worried indeed about the circulation of his titles.

The *Daily Telegraph* circulation for the period July to December 1987 was 1,169,643; for the corresponding period in 1989 it was down to



1,102,609. The position of the *Sunday Telegraph* is worse. Between July and December 1987 circulation was 739,681, while the corresponding period in 1989 showed a drop to 632,923.

The figures for this January will make sad reading, too. The daily is predicted to fall below 1.1 million, and the Sunday to near 600,000 — and all before the launch of the *Sunday Independent* begins to bite.

There is not much comfort there for *Telegraph* shareholders, but Moosehead has not done much better in his other newspaper investments. Through Hollinger Inc, Black now holds about nine million shares in the Express Group. Since his original purchases, which by now will have cost some £90 million, the share price of the Express Group has dropped and Black is looking at a paper loss of at least £2.25 million pounds.

ANDREAS Whittam-Smith, editor of the *Indescribablyboring*, was the organising genius behind the recent editors' statement calling for better standards of journalism and in particular insisting that mistakes should be corrected at once. This last statement is causing some amusement at the Press Council where a substantial complaint about a huge *Independent* article is still waiting for a hearing even though it was made more than two years ago.

The article, well known to *Eye* fans, was written by David McKittrick, the *Independent*'s Irish correspondent, about Colin Wallace and Fred Holroyd, who claim to have been victimised by MI5 for questioning some intelligence cock-ups (and murders) in Northern Ireland.

McKittrick's smear (since denounced even in the *Independent*) was published on 2 September, 1987. Wallace's massive and reasoned complaint arrived at the Press Council in January 1988. The hearing was finally to have been held this month but has been put off not for the first time by Whittam-Smith who says, by way of explanation, that there is a lot going on in Northern Ireland.

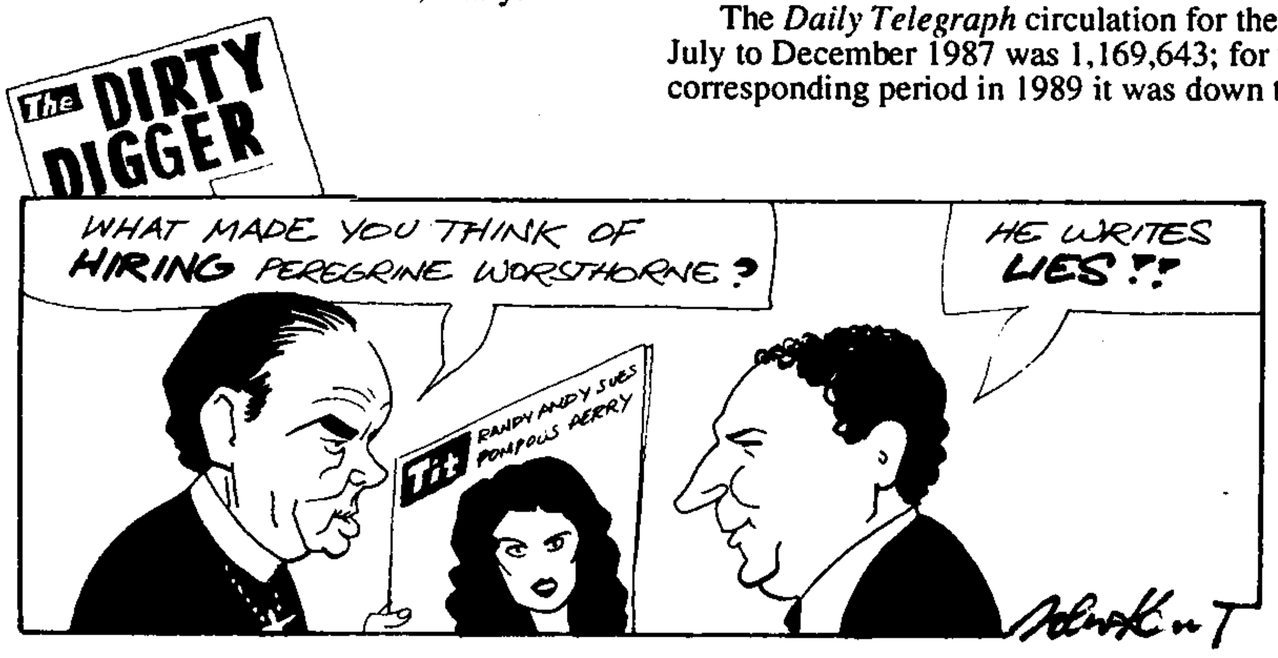
KBH COMMUNICATIONS has issued a press release announcing the arrival of Ms Rowena Webster at the *Sunday Express* where she will conduct investigations. She was formerly an editor of Insight on the *Sunday Times*.

Sunday Express editor Robin Morgan values her highly as an investigative journalist who has conducted some particularly in-depth studies of Uganda for him.

"I want to be part of the team that pulls and coaxes it into shape," she says of Morgan's organ.

LABOUR's shadow cabinet has found a new enemy — Hugo Young — the *Grauniad* hack who on 9 January wrote a half-page tirade savagely criticising Neil Kinnock.

After endless deliberations the Labour leader and his team decided 1) to follow the Biblical example of an eye for an eye and to use every opportunity to denigrate Young; and 2) to tell the public that the big idea for socialists Young claimed was beyond Kinnock's limited capacity lay in their support for freedom, individual rights and individual choice. Including presumably the freedom of the press.



SOME of the best interventions in Parliament go unreported in Hansard. This was the case during recent business questions.

While Labour's Greville Janner, a prominent Jew, complained about the conditions in the Hongkong camps in which Vietnamese boat people are being kept, right-wing Tory Tony Marlowe interjected: "Isn't that precisely the way in which the Israelis treat the Palestinians?"

Labour's pro-Palestinian faction tried desperately not to smirk.

THE government publicity machine was hard at work to ensure minimum coverage for the recent libel victories of Sara Keays.

The main news bulletins on ITN and BBC dealt with the matter by leaving it out altogether. What press publicity there was concentrated on the case against the *Mail on Sunday* and Norman Tebbit, whose facts on Sara Keays' alleged (but non-existent) "undertaking" not to publicise the affair with Cecil Parkinson were entirely wrong.

Little attention was paid to an even more handsome victory over the *Daily Express* and its columnist Charles Moore. Mr Moore is the editor of the *Spectator* in which he is inclined to write important articles lecturing the gutter press on their standards of accuracy.

Moore implied in his article that Sara Keays had sought publicity for the illness of her daughter Flora and had deliberately shown her shaven head to newsmen whom she had arranged to be outside the hospital after the little girl's brain operation. This went down frightfully well with Moore's Thatcherite pals, all of whom regard Keays as a menace.

Moore and the *Express* were inclined to fight the action until someone discovered the facts. Chief among these was that the little girl's illness had been diligently hidden from a rapacious press for two years and that she had been admitted to hospital on each occasion (including the one dealt with by Moore) under an assumed name. Indeed, the newspapers are far more likely to have discovered the identity of the hospital from the little girl's father, who lunched at least two Fleet Street editors in order to inform them (quite wrongly) that he had been refused admission to the hospital.

When these facts were discovered, Moore and the *Express* ran for cover, believed to be a reference to what can only be described as substantial damages.

TONY BLAIR, the smarty-pants in charge of Labour's shadow employment team, was savaged at a PLP meeting for unilaterally changing party policy on the closed shop one Sunday afternoon in Sedgefield.

Harry Ewing, Labour MP for Falkirk East, disclosed to MPs that Blair had told Chris Moncrieff of the Press Association that he was announcing a change of policy at a Sunday afternoon meeting of his constituency party. To everyone's astonishment Blair has since been forced to admit privately that he'd been talking to trade union bosses in secret for months about the matter, but they wouldn't let him tell Labour members of Parliament what was going on.

Blair has yet to reveal which of the union bosses have him in their pocket and give him his instructions. Labour MPs, incensed at the snide way in which smarty-pants attacked the pre-entry closed shop, point out that Blair is a barrister and that the Bar operates the tightest pre-entry closed shop in Britain through the restrictive practices of the inns of court.

GERALD KAUFMAN, shadow foreign secretary, cannot have been too surprised by criticisms made at a meeting of the parliamentary Labour Party of his policy on Hongkong.

They came from MPs of all shades of opinion, expressed by Peter Shore, Clive Soley, Chris Smith, Max Madden, Bernie Grant and Diane Abbott. He may, however, have been surprised that the only MP to support his less than libertarian stance unequivocally was black MP Keith Vaz.

Vaz, who normally keeps his head down, spoke immediately after black colleagues Grant and Abbott had denounced Kaufman and all his works. After a speech which must ensure him a job on the frontbench, Vaz was far from pleased to receive a piece of paper from a colleague with a drawing of 30 pieces of silver on it.

WHO CAN take most credit for the unexpected victory of the King's Cross developers at a House of Commons committee meeting in December (see *Eye* 731)? Step forward John Haw, the former West Midlands Labour councillor recruited by Camden council as chief planner on King's Cross.

Camden council was one of the petitioners against the bill to allow the King's Cross development and John Haw was in Parliament on 12 December. Everyone assumed the bill would collapse, leaving the developers (led by Godfrey Bradman, friend of Thatch) the unwelcome prospect of running their bill alongside another about British Rail high speed Channel links next November. This delay would probably have knocked out the King's Cross development altogether and objectors were preparing to celebrate.

Just before the hearing started, however, Haw approached Brian Coles, barrister for the objecting councils, Camden and Islington. He instructed the lawyer to suggest an option to the committee which would give BR a breathing space of three months to present its high speed link proposals.

Coles dutifully followed his instructions. The parliamentary committee, whose general bias is of course in favour of a development so close to such a close friend of the prime minister, was delighted with this sudden and unexpected option. They plumped for it at once. The bill will now almost certainly go forward in its present form.

The developers went straight from the hearings to a hastily convened champagne celebration. The *Eye* was not invited, so we cannot divulge whether or not one of the toasts was to John Haw.

DULWICH Labour Party is starting the tortuous process of choosing a prospective candidate in accordance with Labour rules which forbid contestants from doing anything that might help them win.

The last candidate, Kate Hoey, was whipped away and given a safer seat as a reward for being a faithful Kinnockite and Dulwich members know they can now choose anyone they like so long as it is someone Kinnock likes.

In theory canvassing is forbidden, but the leader of the local Southwark council, Anne Matthews, is distributing printed handouts with a picture of herself to members attending meetings.

Right-wingers are backing a millionaire's wife, Barbara Follett (husband Ken writes spy books). She lives on Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, which is a wee bit remote from the worries of Dulwich mortgagepayers.

Her chief supporter is Ann Ward, ex-councillor, ex-Trotskyite and ex-*Daily Mirror* photographer, so she knows how to use her elbows. She is phoning members to urge the virtues of her nag. As Ms Ward is an ardent Kinnockite, members are concluding that it must be legit to campaign by phone.

The selection will only be overturned if a leftie wins.

"Counsel for the persecution, m'lord..."

THERE ARE some in the Enfield North constituency of employment minister Tim Eggar who wish the burly, streetfighting man (see *Eye* 730) would learn to keep his mouth shut. There are those, on the other hand, who in the past have been only too pleased to get him talking.

Eye readers will recall how former Royal Ordnance factory workers who set up their own businesses in Enfield were upset by Mr Eggar's attitude when they were told to leave their small business centre in the town to make way for warehousing.

Recent comments he has made in *Business Talk for North London* on the need to "provide the right kind of premises, support systems and facilities for the smaller business" have offended them further.

But while the ungrateful workers in Enfield bleat that actions speak louder than words, not everyone is as dismissive of Mr Eggar.

As viewers of a recent *World In Action* on the business activities of MPs were told, the merchant bank Hill Samuel was once very keen to hear what the rising Commons star had to say about electricity privatisation.

The bank, anxious to pick up fees for handling privatisation business, invited him to lunch. According to the bank's note, Eggar said they should "look more carefully at the South of Scotland which is a self-contained entity and the one most ready-made for privatisation. We should also have a good chance of getting in via Woodmac".

The bank was so impressed with Mr Eggar it decided it would also ask him for information on water privatisation.

Woodmac referred to Wood Mackenzie, a firm of stockbrokers to whom Mr Eggar was at the time a paid consultant. Both Hill Samuel and Wood Mackenzie went on to become advisers to the proposed electricity privatisation, but not in the South of Scotland.

EASILY the most unpopular person in the House of Commons is a Mr J.L.G. Dobson, the accountant.

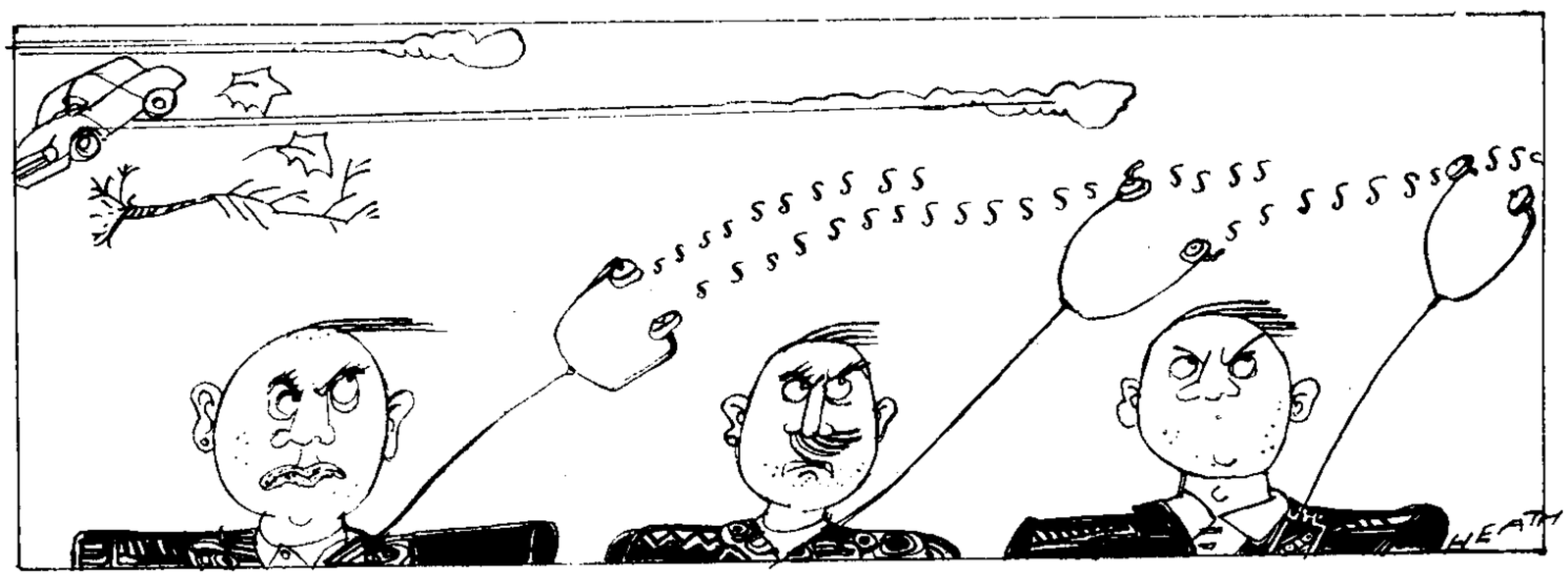
This follows the decisions of some millionaire Tory MPs like stockbrocker Anthony Beaumont-Dark (known to colleagues as "Darkie" because of his liberal attitude to foreigners) not to take the full 10 per cent increase on MPs' salaries.

Mr Dobson has taken leave of his senses and has written to every member telling them how they can join "Darkie" and dock their pay. Money-grabbing Labour MPs who believe the job of the workers is to screw the bosses for every penny they can get are incensed.

'Backbiter'

NUMERO UNO

MICHAEL HEATH



NEWS reaches me of old friend John Browne, the Conservative member for Winchester whose unfortunate divorce attracted so much unwarranted publicity.

It seems that in the chamber of the House of Commons "Brylcreem", as he is fondly known, has decided to move seats. He used to perch in the front row below the gangway on the government side in what is known as the "hooligans' bench" among such notable dissenters as Norman Tebbit, Anthony Beaumont-Dark, Sir Ian Gilmour *et al*. But he has recently taken to sitting further back among the government loyalists.

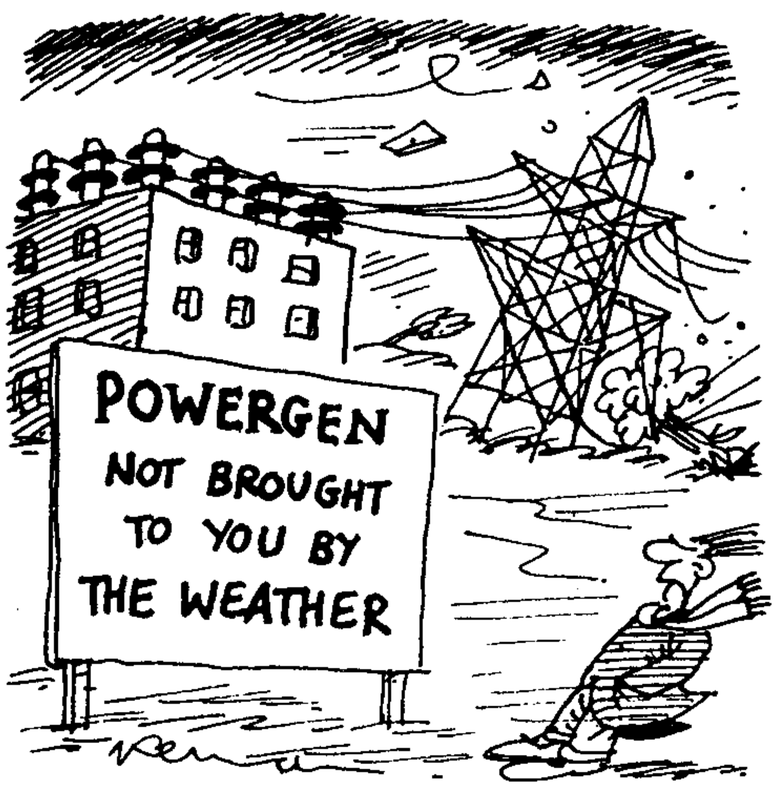
Tory dissenters and loyalists alike are not sure what all this means, but they are sure that they will read with interest the report of the select comittee on members' interests into Browne's declarations and non-declarations, due any day now.

MY OLD friend Cap'n Bob has recently picked up substantial libel damages in a settlement from Longman, publishers of the *Chronicle of the 20th Century*, over an indexing error.

The book's index contained four references to Robert Maxwell. But while three concerned the exploits of Robert Maxwell, the laughable Czech-born millionaire publisher, one reference was to Robert Maxwell, the Scottish engineer who had been accused of spying for the British Government in Libya and later freed on the orders of Colonel Gadaffi.

One of the defences available to a defendant in a libel action is that the words complained of by the plaintiff are not defamatory. How on earth could Cap'n Bob — a loyal and patriotic British citizen who won an MC during the Second World War — have been offended or damaged by the confusing and untrue implication that he had been accused of spying for Her Majesty by the Libyans?

Longman deserves scorn for giving in to this absurd litigation.



Pseuds Corner

Mr Milmo said: "You do not seem to have a very high opinion of the popular press."
"I am the editor of the Sunday Times," replied Mr Neil.

Daily Telegraph

When asked what his favourite drink was, Diogenes the Cynic replied, "Someone else's!", but my own answer would be: Scotch. The conversion occurred when I was seventeen, and a guest of the Maharaja of Jaipur.

DAVID PROFUMO
Departures

A rather more downbeat version of social activity is given in Joanne Finkelstein's *Dining Out* (Polity £25) in which the author presents restaurant eating as an act of purposive non-responsibility, an adaptation to pre-given sociabilities about how, where and what we eat. To eat in such contexts is to be disciplined, involving a kind of gastronomic taylorisation of the body, psyche and palatte (sic). Hard to stomach the notion that eating my TV dinner is an act of personal liberation — does this book amount to a charter for the privatised self? Still faced with a departmental Christmas dinner I must concede Finkelstein may have a point.

NETWORK
(Newsletter: British Sociological Association)

Why is it, then, that each time I see him [Ken Dodd], the primeval joy of theatre is renewed? He makes me laugh and he makes me cry, he is the Lord of Misrule, the spirit of anarchy, a subversive social commentator ("An average Yorkshireman is the only man who can outrun an Aberdeen flag-seller", "There are no Jacuzzis in Liverpool; we just put a teaspoonful of Andrew's in the bathwater"), the heir to Grimaldi's Harlequin as well as Canio incarnate in *Pagliacci*, Joycean surrealist, seaside culture purveyor, chauvinist cheerleader, buffoon. If you think "rissole" an inherently unfunny word, don't bother. But if you have not seen Dodd on stage, you haven't really lived.

MICHAEL COVENEY
Observer

In response to the wordless question "Who feels myself stop?" and later, "Who knows myself stop?" with the last four steps before each turn came a startling increase in and heightening of perception. I reached knowing terms with a fig tree during one session and watching the temptation to become firmly attached to it and sit in it for ever. I moved on to reach a level of appreciation of some tree bark which was almost intimidating but without threat.

LINDA BROWN
Bath Buddhist Group newsletter

According to the Chinese horoscope, of the four established party leaders Ashdown would serve Britain best. His sign has the greater sensitivity to current world matters, such as dealing with environmental issues, and the Snake is a natural lover of peace.

BARRY FANTONI
The Times

CONTRIBUTORS: E. Strobes, Helen Buckingham, Anon, R.M. Carey, M.B. Goring, E. Strobes.

£10 paid for entries

● *JUST what are the chinless wonders in the Buckingham Palace press office up to? Their mutterings over the marital status of our beautiful Princess Royal have apparently left Anne spitting mad.*

According to palace leaks, widely reported by Fleet Street, Anne is anxious for the courts to grant her a "quickie" divorce from Mark Phillips. Anne has confided to me, however, that nothing could be further from the truth.

Not only is she not discussing divorce, but she tells me she is even considering a reconcialtion with "Fog", her lithe equestrian who, as the French magazine Paris Match reported last year, seemed to get on so well with Pamella Bordes when they met at a riding clinic.

Just why the press office has fed this nonsense to the newshounds is a mystery.

● *I AM increasingly concerned for the sanity of my Garrick Club chum, the ex-saintly Andreas Whittam-Strobes, publisher of that fine children's weekly The Indy. Back from a flying visit to Romania in time for the launch of his new Sunday rag, Andreas tells me he has had a vision. "By the end of this decade," he vows, with a manic gleam in his eye, "I shall be the biggest media magnate in Europe!"*

DISTURBING news reaches me of Mrs Thatcher's friend and adviser David Hart (see *Eyes passim*), recently revealed to be behind *British Briefing*, a totally mad right-wing "newsletter" Hart describes as "an intelligence analysis of the extreme left".

It was Hart, I gather, who bankrolled Charles Elwell, a former senior MI5 spook, to produce and edit the loony slander sheet which brands as fellow-travellers such well known subversives as my chum Bryan Gould, Labour's shadow environment secretary.

Elwell is of course well qualified for such work. His career began in counter-espionage, specialising in anti-Soviet bloc case work. When MI5 switched emphasis to domestic political targets in the seventies, he was made head of F Branch and investiged left-wing political activists, trade unionists and troublesome pressure groups like the National Council for Civil Liberties.

It is no doubt thanks to *Briefing*'s present targeting of such dangerous outfits as Shelter, Child Poverty Action Group, War On Want, Oxfam, Christian Aid and of course the NCCL, that we can all sleep sound in our beds. I am sure Mrs Thatcher is an avid reader.

ACTRESS Moira Fraser has been keeping a low profile recently. I have a feeling that the next few weeks might see her coming into the limelight a bit more.
Just a hunch.

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

THIS COLUMN has never before dealt with barbarism in the Irish Republic as comments by an Englishman on such matters tend to be useless if not positively counterproductive. But now I feel it is my duty to give support to The Dublin Urban Salvation Front and publicise its Ceausescu Medal Award — a most prestigious honour surely inspired by our own Sir Hugh Casson Medal.

The connection between Ireland and Romania was first made in an editorial in *Apollo* a year ago: "From having been one of the loveliest countries in Europe, the Republic of Ireland has squandered much of its beauty through indifference, historical prejudice and lack of understanding. It is no exaggeration to say that if things go on as at present, in 20 or 30 years time the effect will not be all that different from what Ceausescu is accomplishing in Romania." Although the monster Ceausescu may now be dead, terrible plans to drive new roads through the centre of Dublin are still active.

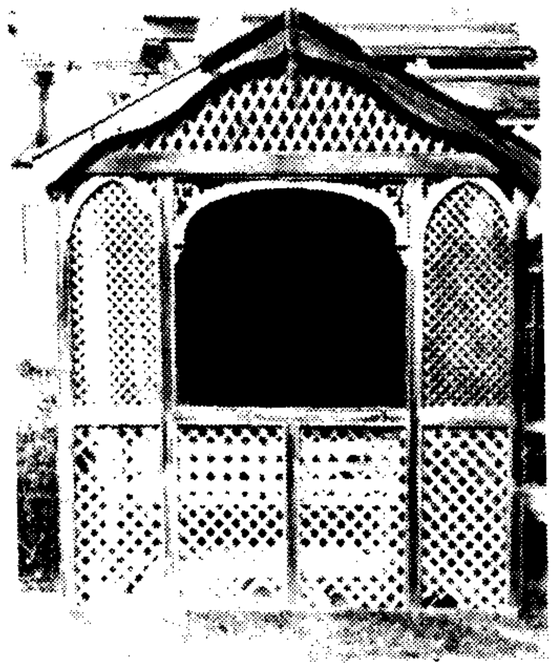
The great joke is that Dublin is to be European City of Culture 1991, for whereas the present holder of that curious title, Glasgow, stopped ripping itself apart in the 1970s and has since restored many of its magnificent buildings, the destruction of what was once one of the finest Georgian planned cities in the British Isles goes on apace.

I do not know what the Dublin Urban Salvation Front can do against the forces of darkness, but I wish them luck and exhort others to shame the authorities there by laughing at the absurdity and hypocrisy of Dublin being a "City of Culture". Meanwhile, here are the Supreme Ceausescu Memorial Order of Merit Awards and Medals for 1987-89.

The **Bronzed Aluminium Medal** goes to the Fianna Fail Group Dublin City Council "for whipping through Dublin Corporation's disastrous Dual Carriageway for Patrick St/Clanbrassil St and blindly supporting the various other road plans, in spite of all evidence from abroad that a road-based solution to the city's traffic problems will only make the situation worse."

The **Silver Tinfoil Medal** goes to the Teashop, Charles Haughey, who is now posturing internationally as President of Europe, rather as the wicked old Conducator used to do. His citation reads: "For failing to extend his much vaunted artistic concerns to encompass the conservation of Dublin as a great European cultural legacy. For 'arranging' to have the city designated as 'European City of Culture 1991' but doing absolutely nothing in preparation... For treating the city as little better than a quarry for the construction industry. For presiding over a government whose priorities for the city may be judged by the National Development Plan which allocates £212 million for roads and £36 million for public transport."

If we had a London Urban Salvation Front our own Prime Minister would be a dead cert for a Ceausescu Medal...



CARS. Horrible, ugly, stinking, polluting, destructive cars. These importunate things are now spoiling what promised to be one of the best set pieces of historic preservation in Britain.

My picture shows one of the garden houses in the walled 18th century gardens behind the Officers' Terrace in Chatham Dockyard. This most elegant early l8th century row of houses is now being restored — as houses — by the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, which is splendid. What is not splendid is that it is also proposed to build garages under the lower ends of the gardens behind. Because of their condition, the retaining walls will have to be taken down and rebuilt, along with the structures above. These include the "cabins" through which several of the gardens are approached by stairs — features which give these special and delightful gardens a distinct nautical character.

The Garden History Society and the Georgian Group have condemned this threat to the integrity of these unique gardens, but English Heritage is being flabby. What is monstrous is that the garages are not necessary. A car park is already being provided for the terrace and for the new housing being built nearby, and the allocation here is three cars for each house — which already seems too generous. But if a fourth car parking space is really necessary, it can be provided by making garages under the terraced road in front of the Officers' Terrace. This would be discreet, unobjectionable and cheaper — and justified by the precedent of Royal York Crescent in Clifton.

The Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust is undertaking all this development as it desperately needs money to continue with its exemplary restoration of the great naval structures in its care. Fine. But it is tragic and stupid to spoil one of the most special features of the dockyard when better alternatives are available.

'Piloti'

CHARITY NEWS

'ICAN'
ALLEN GRAHAM TRUST

THE children's charity ICAN (Invalid Children's Aid Nationwide) is still recovering from the departure of charismatic director general Jim McKinnon to the Disabled Living Foundation.

Following the revelation in *Eye* 729 of how McKinnon and his sidekick Paul Stephenson used the last weeks of McKinnon's contract with ICAN to split up the hundred-year-old charity, the chairman of ICAN, Donald Chilvers, ordered a confidential document to be issued to council members refuting every point. Chilvers then resigned for health reasons.

This is not the only such resignation to accompany Jim McKinnon's career movements. In 1977, McKinnon was chairman of the Elfrida Rathbone charity in Manchester while at the same time an employee of NACRO (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders). The then general secretary of Elfrida Rathbone, Jan Cosgrove, found his friend Jim McKinnon conducting a secret formal enquiry into his health. As a result of this he was asked to resign for health reasons. The bewildered Cosgrove then found that he was replaced by... Jim McKinnon. McKinnon's extremely sudden departure from NACRO remains obscure. As does the circumstance in which he left the Rathbone charity. In fact, NACRO, Rathbone and ICAN all maintain an icy silence when asked about ex-Jesuit priest McKinnon's record.

New information has meanwhile come to light about the circumstances in which Paul Stephenson led the breakaway from ICAN to form the ICAN Allen Graham Trust. Last June Stephenson called his staff together in the ICAN Wythenshawe office. Fearful that another round of redundancy was to be announced, staff were instead subjected to an impassioned statement from Stephenson to the effect that the interests of disabled young people could only be served by creating a breakaway charity in Manchester. Jim McKinnon attended the meeting to support Stephenson.

Stephenson's sincerity could not be doubted. But did his staff know that Stephenson had applied for the job of director-general of ICAN on 5 May 1989? And why did this split, so essential for the needs of disabled people, not figure in his thinking until he heard that the puritanical disability specialist Brian Jones was going to get the job instead of him?

The curious situation therefore arises whereby the ICAN Allen Graham Trust in Manchester is a separate charity from the original ICAN at Allen Graham House in London. And the supporters of a number of sponsored events held for ICAN in the north to raise money for handicapped children do not seem to have been told that their money would not be used to help children. It would be used to support the ICAN Allen Graham Trust's Employment Training work for adults. This includes the setting up of a printing business in the Wirral, a catering business in Manchester, a commercial nursery service, a riding stable, a sheet metal business in Cardiff, a carpentry and joinery concern and similar activities not normally associated with charities. Developing a theme park with a fake castle, funfairs and an aquarium was even planned.

The one exception is that the ICAN Allen Graham Trust has a plan to give a six-figure sum to Wythenshawe Hospital for a children's play therapy building and the desirability of a charity handing over such a sum to a health authority might be challenged by some.

Wythenshawe Hospital is part of the South Manchester Health Authority, whose chairman is Gordon Raymond Legat. The chairman of the ICAN Allen Graham Trust is named as Gordon Raymond Legat. Assuming the Charity Commissioners agree that no conflict of interest arises, Mr Legat will no doubt be willing to receive the cheque from Mr Legat.

EYE TV

Behind The Headlines

(BBCI)

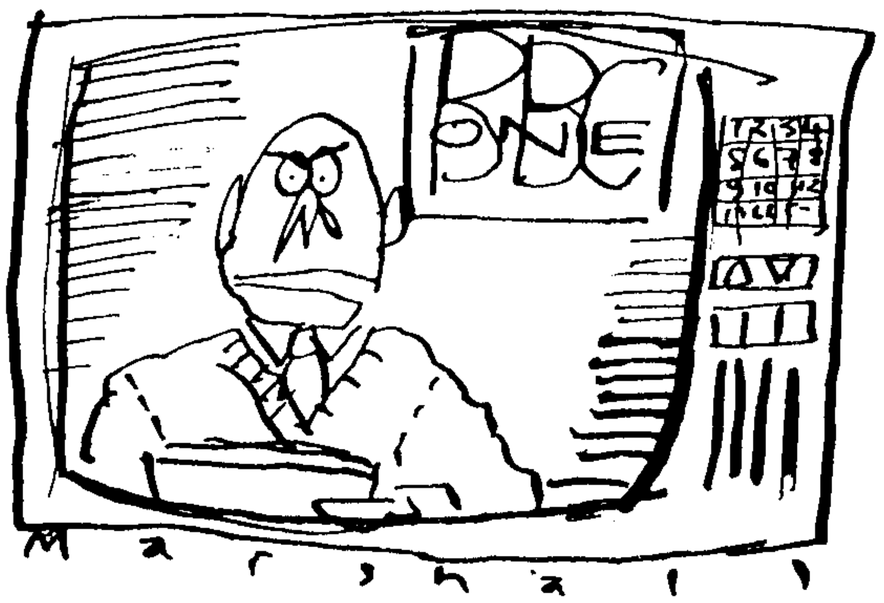
WITH LITTLE publicity from the BBC — a deliberate omission, the viewer soon suspects — Jeffrey Archer has begun yet another new fantasy-life: as a chatshow host. *Behind The Headlines*, a daily tea-time cheapie repeated at midnight, is, from Monday to Wednesday and then again on Friday, a respectable enough production including presenters as elevated as Jeremy Paxman. But on Thursdays Jeff is let loose. The result is a spectacle as comic-hideous as Peter O'Toole's Macbeth. If the word can be spread and video recorders coordinated, we might soon be able to call Jeffrey Archer a cult.

A good producer, Carole Stone, is in charge of the show, so there remains the possibility that the contract was an attempt by decent-people thinking to thwart the next resistible rise of the man who gloats about his ability to bounce back. But, whatever the reasoning, the event is perfect therapeutic viewing for anyone who has ever had an unkind thought about the playwright, politician, novelist, athlete, prat.

The format sets Archer alongside Paul Boateng at a horseshoe table. This seems to be an attempt at the loggerheads combinations of presenters favoured by the American series *Crossfire*, on which Tebbit and Mitchell's *Target* for the now-forgotten Sky Television is based. Archer and Boateng is supposed to be political balance. Although Archer, as his incumbency at Central Office made clear, may call himself a Tory his thought processes are a rag-bag of half-understood statistics, half-articulated prejudices and policies half-retained from a school essay on the theme of "If I Were Prime Minister".

Doubling the adversarial structure, Jeffrey and Paul are given two disputing guests. On the most recent programme, for example, the first subject was the difficulty in making some fathers responsible for the children they bring in to the world. This was a fascinating subject, with many implications, but it was soon clear that Cecil Parkinson could relax: Jeffrey wasn't talking about people like that. He was talking about *ordinary* people.

Indeed, it was soon clear that he saw his television persona as that of tribune for the decent ordinary people against the indecent ordinary people. Visually, he was



"Viewers are warned that the next programme has the word 'fuck' in it"

modelling himself on a barrister, although the only counsel you would ever see quite as wooden and unsophisticated as this would be in Jeffrey Archer's court room drama *Beyond Reasonable Doubt*.

Jeffrey is particularly fond of business with his glasses, a pair of goldrimmed half-moons which he waves, sucks, wedges between emphatically-clenched palms. The prosecuting counsel in his play did much the same and the great writer was obviously particularly struck by it.

Verbally, his manner is an amalgam of all his fantasy roles, with fragments of some of the actual ones thrown in. There is the Television Father Of The Nation, on the model of Richard Dimbleby. For example, Archer croons to the national secretary of the TGWU: "I accept what you're saying and the sincerity with which you are saying it... however, I am going to ask you a series of questions which do not require speeches from either of us..." Then there is the Prosecuting Counsel: "Forgive me, but you are going to let them get away with it..." The Prime Minister: "Let me finish... let me finish..." The Golf Club Philosopher: "Why should the nation be expected to be responsible...?"

And, finally, most revealingly and squirmingly, there is the schoolboy taking the debating society really seriously. "You let her get off the hook...", he was heard to hiss at Boateng following one exchange with a guest.

The early contributors to the programme have already realised that the best way to deal with Archer's questioning is a beady "In what way?" at the end of some piece of interrogative bluster. "Jeffrey, if I may say so, you're mixing up your figures...", an expert on one-parent families murmured. "Agreed!," barked Archer. "Agreed!" You could see swirling round his head the prep-school lesson about taking your punishment like a man.

The tea-time and midnight transmission times regrettably ensure that the kind of person Jeffrey Archer really believes in — the kind that does an honest day's work and is early to bed — will miss the programme twice. The rest of us should take the pleasure of watching him proving that he is a cult.

'Square Eyes'

I-SKY

Cross-ownership of media 'no threat to competition'

Ownership of satellite television channels by a newspaper proprietor poses no threat to media diversity or competition, according to a book by a leading free-market economist.

Dr Cento Veljanovski, research and editorial director of the Institute of Economic

Affairs, gives that view in *The Media in Britain Today*, the first comprehensive study of the fast-expanding British media industry. The book was launched yesterday by News International, which includes among its subsidiaries Times Newspapers (publisher of *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*) and Sky Television.

RICHARD EVANS
The Times

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

MEDIA NEWS

LOYAL hacks at the BBC have been chortling at the fate of former economics editor, bouffant-haired Daniel Jeffreys (see *Eyes passim*).

Edged out of the Beeb for his bizarre appearance and manner, he returned to his first home in the City — in the equities department of Citicorp Scrimgeour Vickers.

Two weeks later poor Daniel was out of a job again. Nothing personal this time — he was accompanied by around 70 members of the equities team.

But the hacks are chortling through clenched teeth: Jeffreys' two weeks apparently earned him a pay-off of around £35,000 and he got to keep the company XJS. Few of the Beeb's underworked bureaucrats and journos can expect similar treatment when the Philips report on staffing is implemented later this year.

Desperate to justify their jobs, the bureaucrats' latest idea is a helicopter and helipad on the roof of the new White City development. The plan is to get to major disasters before Sky News or ITN, who already have choppers.

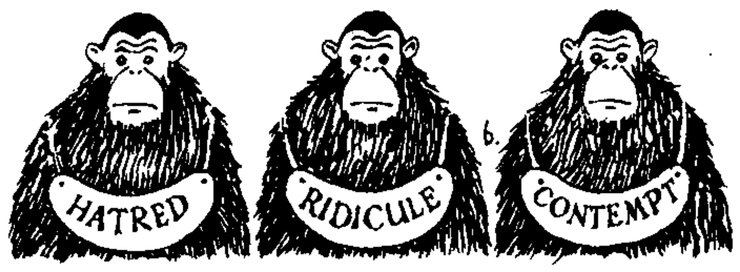
The scheme would mean spending huge amounts to reinforce the new building's roof, plus at least £1 million for the helicopter. Impetus for it follows the Beeb's shameful coverage of the Deal bombing. A series of equipment failures meant it had no pictures for more than 12 hours while ITN and Sky were on air live in less than half the time.

TODAY TV-am, tomorrow the world. One of the most astonishing appointments in the history of journalism has been made at the *Sunday Mirror*: Eve Pollard has hired as her new £50,000-a-year features editor someone who has never worked on a newspaper.

In fact, until now the closest Charlie Golding has come to the media was when he worked as La Bollard's "gofer" during her stint as a performer on TV-am. Perhaps this is all the experience that a senior *Mirror* executive needs.

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
JIM MOIR HEAD OF TV LIGHT ENTER-TAINMENT
REITH
"NOW LOOK HERE, DAVE ALLEN, THE 'F' WORD IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE IN BBC COMEDY THESE DAYS!"
"WHAT 'F' WORD'S THAT THEN?"
ROVER'S REPEAT
"FUNNY!"
"Trebles and Terry & Junes all round!"
Xan Rune

LIBEL NEWS



CERTAIN members of the Surrey Union Hunt, through its enthusiastic stag-hunting solicitor Matthew Knight of Cripps Harries Hall, are still threatening the *Eye* with libel proceedings. Although they have dropped their demand that our reporter should disclose the original source of his information, they have pointed out that "such non co-operation will probably materially add to any award of damages that may be made against him personally in any action that our Clients may pursue against him".

The litigation arises out of our report that the Surrey Union Hunt was suing British downhill skier Stuart Wilkie for writing a letter to two Surrey newspapers in which he said a live fox had been thrown to the hounds at the end of a hunt meeting.

This is not the first time the Surrey Union Hunt has been accused of breaching the rules of the Master of Fox Hounds Association, which require that a humane killer (ie, a gun) is used to despatch the fox before its carcass is thrown to the hounds.

In November 1986 the *Dorking Advertiser* reported that a member of the hunt had witnessed the throwing of a live fox to the hounds at Winterfold, near Shere, and had been disgusted by it. According to the paper, this member "criticised hunt management and said he might join another hunt".

And in April 1988, a *Morning Star* journalist described how she had witnessed the digging out of a fox. "With a broken leg and torn and bloody flesh hanging from its body, the animal tried to hobble away, and three growling terriers dashed after it." Again, no humane killer was used.

The threatened libel proceedings against the *Eye* names four prospective plaintiffs — Mr Michael Taylor, Mrs Rosemary Peters, and Mr M Fawcett, the joint masters of the hunt; and Mr P Ellrich, the professional huntsman. In their latest letter, Cripps Harries Hall state: "Our Clients' very firm instructions are that *they* have never been involved in activities of any sort which breach the Rules of the Master of Fox Hounds Association..."

Neither our original article nor Stuart Wilkie's letter to the *Dorking Advertiser*, suggested that any of these four persons had themselves been implicated in the alleged incident. Indeed, they weren't even named. Yet in an earlier letter to the *Eye*, Cripps Harries Hall claimed "to act for 'The Hunt'". How confusing...

LOWLIFE

FURTHER evidence has emerged of the behaviour of Paul "Raging Bull" Pickering, the acclaimed comic novelist and writer of letters to the *Eye*, regarding his phobia about broken glass and his chivalrous disposition towards the female sex.

Susan Morrall is a Canadian-born film producer and her husband, Terence Ryan, is a British-born feature film director. Through their company Opix Films they had commissioned novelist Mary Flanagan (Pickering's long-suffering mistress) to write a film script. Last year Flanagan invited the couple to dinner at her home in Islington to meet some of her friends.

When they arrived, bearing gifts of flowers and wine, they were introduced to the only other guest, Paul Pickering, who had seen them drive up in an old Porsche. Somewhat ominously his first remark to them was that "people who drive fast cars deserve to die in them".

They went downstairs to the basement kitchen and dining room and Pickering was on feisty form, volunteering aggressive opinions about American politics, the evils of capitalism, and the election of President Bush, having mistakenly formed the impression that Morrall was American. As the discussion grew more heated, Ryan stopped talking to Pickering.

What happened next was quite extraordinary. Morrall, who had been admiring her hostess's antique cut-glass fruit bowls, was somewhat taken aback when Pickering suddenly felt provoked to throw his glass at her. It landed in front of her, smashing into pieces and damaging one of the fruit bowls.

Morrall had just recovered from the shock of this when she looked up to see a wine bottle whizzing towards her. Fortunately it missed. By this time Morrall's husband, who stands well over six feet tall, was moving round the table towards Pickering, who by now was brandishing a candlestick complete with lighted candle and was attempting to lunge at Morrall's hair with the flaming wick. As Ryan sought to restrain Pickering while his wife made her retreat, Mary Flanagan started to restrain Ryan.

The guests fled upstairs to the sound of frantic shouting and more smashing glass behind them. Pickering charged up the stairs with Flanagan hanging on to him from behind, trying to drag him down. It was for this reason alone that when Pickering headbutted Susan Morrall he only managed to catch the end of her nose and forehead.

At this point Ryan reappeared with the coats and escorted his wife out of the house. Pickering shouted at them from the doorstep: "Don't you ever come back to my house again!"

It took Morrall several days to recover from this unpleasant experience. A trembling Mary Flanagan later met Ryan and said that she was writing to apologise. She never did.

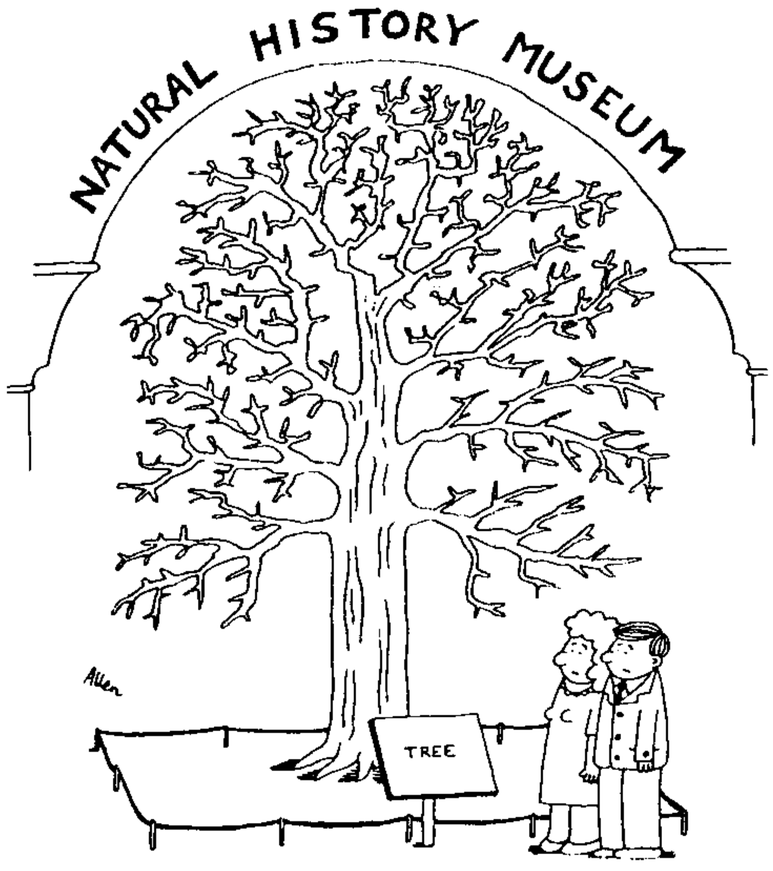
WORLD OF HYPE

PAUL "Dimmo" Dimoldenberg (see last *Eye*) is not the only Labour member of Westminster council who earns a crust by acting as a PR man for property developers and other types not normally associated with the Labour Party.

Fellow councillor Peter Bradley, who like "Dimmo" works for the Good Relations agency, is currently busy justifying the closure of Richmond ice-rink against a chorus of protest from local skaters and children. Bradley's services are being retained at a handsome fee by London and Edinburgh Trust, a firm of developers which intends to bulldoze the ice-rink and replace it with 250 private houses.

An original agreement with Richmond council stipulated that LET would provide another ice-rink elsewhere in the area — but only if the project was approved by last October. Thanks to objections from a local golf club, the deadline was not met. On behalf of LET, Bradley told the *Evening Standard* two weeks ago that, while aware of "the needs of people" in the area, nevertheless "we are under no obligation now to build a new ice-rink".

No doubt this is all in keeping with Labour policy. Or will the Westminster Labour Group eventually stir itself to do something about the embarrassing antics of Bradley and Dimmo?



THE recent top management shake-up at British Rail had one notable omission — there is still no sign of a replacement for Trevor Toolan, the personnel boss who made such a hash of last year's dispute.

For months the rail unions, who have no time for Toolan, have been led to believe he was on his way out; but he still remains fireproof. They suspect his security of tenure may have something to do with his knowing too much about the likely outcome of the (extraordinarily long) police inquiry into the connections between top BR managers and the Austrian equipment manufacturer, Plasser (see *Eyes passim*).

Toolan had no connection with Plasser, but if he knows what may happen as a result of the inquiry, he might be (as the careful sea captain once put it) safer on board.

Sporting Life

SATURDAY 13 January will long be remembered as a glorious date in the history of Ascot racecourse. This was the day the heroic clerk of the course, the Hon Nicky Beaumont, launched a bold strike against that most pernicious and upstart breed — the common racegoer.

Never mind the jolly adverts encouraging all the family to enjoy a great day out at Ascot. The Hon Nicky had other ideas. He decreed that for the January Saturday and at all meetings thereafter, no persons would be allowed into Tattersalls Enclosure wearing jeans or a denim jacket.

According to Beaumont, all wearers of such apparel are self-evidently louts and yobbos and not the sort who should be allowed to pay nearly £8 for the privilege of entering the overcrowded, formica-topped dump that comprises the Ascot Tattersalls accommodation. That louts might also wear Armani suits and possess a voucher for the Royal Enclosure has never crossed Beaumont's mind.

If this had been San Siroor Randwick or Belmont Park, old Nick would never have dared try on such a rule outside the most exclusive areas of the track. But he knew he could rely on the loyal support of that notorious gang of bullies and snobs, the Ascot gatemen. These bowler-hatted and often moustachioed elderly men all appear to be first cousins of Oxbridge college porters and other self-appointed guardians of the sergeants' mess.

No meeting is complete until the air echoes to their cries of "Not in there", "Not with that badge" and "You need a tie". Racegoers unlucky enough to transgress are virtually poked in the solar plexus or secured in a half-nelson before being frog-marched to the exit with cheery menace.

With this crew at his disposal Beaumont proceeded to lay a wily trap. No public warnings of the new dress code were published anywhere and racegoers in jeans and denim jackets were allowed into Tattersalls on the Friday, completely unaware that the rules would be changed the next day. As the crowds rolled up to the turnstiles on Saturday Nicky's gatemen turned away riff-raff by the dozen. Resistance was hopeless. Some tried to argue but Beaumont flatly refused to come out and talk to them. Some poor souls were ushered to the Siberia of the Silver Ring. Most just trooped back to the car parks and the station.

When Ascot first started trying to improve the nation's dress it obliged punters arriving at the Members Entrance without a tie to buy a nasty brown polyester job supplied by the Ascot Authority. Will it now poerhaps open an entire menswear boutique in the underpass behind Tatts?

Ascot, don't forget, stages the laughably entitled "Festival of British Racing" in September. Only those born before 1914 need apply.

'Major Bonkers'

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

WEST WILTSHIRE

AFTER East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Romania, it could only have been a matter of time before the timid Tories of rural Trowbridge, West Wiltshire, transformed their ploughshares into swords and turned them on their discredited leaders.

Since the last *Eye* appeared, three have been dumped: Bruce Bennett (council chairman), Kay Self (chair of the Tory group and of the district council's policy and resources committee) and Mary Pearce (chair of the management sub-committee).

It was this ruling triumvirate, readers will recall, who marched into the office of council chief executive Don Latham in January demanding his instant resignation. Colleagues felt such lynchmob tactics were not only illegal but also uncalled for: Latham was swiftly reinstated and a meeting of the Tory group then decided to sack the three of them instead.

Meanwhile district auditor Richard da Costa — known for his sterling work on Murkeyside, the rottenest borough of all — is poring over piles of documents retrieved from the district council's Trowbridge Lubyanka. He is investigating the "sale" of West Wiltshire Software Ltd, a computer firm started by the council, to West Wiltshire Information Systems Ltd, a firm owned and run by former council employees.

This is not the only area of concern in the privatisation-mad region; embarrassing questions are now being asked over everything from land deals to legal services and the row has had repercussions in Westminster. In the last issue we reported the spat between Labour's David Blunkett and Stuart Randall over who would finally drive the stake into the embattled local authority; now a rift appears in Tory ranks, too.

Before Christmas, local Westbury MP Sir Dennis Walters reassured readers of the *Bath and West Evening Chronicle* that while he welcomed the district auditor's investigation, local government minister David Heathcoat-Amory had told him "he is now largely satisfied there has been no malpractice".

Strangely, Heathcoat-Amory has no such recollection. He recently told the local Labour Party in Trowbridge: "I have made no such statement. It is not for me to offer an opinion one way or another on the question. Nor am I in a position to assess the evidence or form a judgement..."

Obviously another case of media misrepresentation.

KENNET

THE Princess Michael Award for Plagiarism surely goes to Brian Warwick, Kennet District Council's tourism development manager.

Last September he presented a "tourism action programme for Wiltshire" to the county's Consultative Forum on Tourism under the auspices of the Kennet Tourism Association (Founder: B.Warwick).

The seven-page paper was received with great enthusiasm, but what members of the forum did not know was that it was almost word-for-word identical to a tourism action programme for South Herefordshire, produced by the Heart of England Tourist Board in January 1989.

Sadly the "author" of the Kennet report had not even fully mastered the art of plagiarism. Question marks were raised by the statement that Wiltshire had no nationally known attractions — Stonehenge? Avebury? — the latter World Heritage Site being on Mr Warwick's own patch.

Later, the report did turn its attention to Avebury — simply by substituting it for "Symond's Yat" in the South Herefordshire report. Thus:

South Herefordshire Report: "The appearance of, and facilities in, Symond's Yat, as a 'beauty spot' and recipient of many visitors, should be considerably improved."

Kennet Report: "The appearance of, and facilities in, Avebury, as a well-known 'beauty spot' and recipient of many visitors, should be considerably improved.

And on and on and on.

This summer Brenda will make an official visit to Kennet to re-open the Kennet and Avon Canal — unless, of course, she turns up in South Herefordshire which is a mistake anyone could make.

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE

TORIES in East Staffordshire may lose control of the district council they hold by one vote following their remarkable U-turn over the building of a prison and 600 homes near Uttoxeter.

Furious locals intend to stand an independent against their local Tory, John Snow, and they think they can win.

Plans to build a prison at Marchington army camp were opposed by councillors in February 1989 and on 14 March 1989 Grimley JR Eve, agents for the Home Office — among others — confirmed the plan would not be pursued.

But on 12 May two council representatives met the agents to discuss a new proposal and on 18 May the planning and development committee suddenly changed its mind and gave clearance for the prison, this time on land nearby owned by Marchington Gliding Club. The new proposals also happen to allow for 600 homes and some industrial units on the former army camp.

The cost of building sewers, roads and other vital infrastructure to the area will now be shared by the Home Office and private enterprise. If the Home Office does cough up — in the past the lack of infrastructure was said to make development of the camp prohibitively expensive — the value of the land as a potential housing site would shoot up.

Marchington Camp is owned by Marchington Properties, whose representative on this issue is local developer Jimmy Leavesley. Marchington Properties can be contacted at the offices of his company, JT Leavesley.

This is not the first time dealings between Mr Leavesley and East Staffordshire District Council have brought mutual benefits. The council used to own Uttoxeter racecourse, but set up a private firm — Marlborough Leisure — to run it. Its directors included Tory council leader Erl Thorneywill and Labour opposition leader Dennis Heptonstall.

When Marlborough hit trouble Midlands developers St Modwen stepped in and saved the firm. Mr Leavesley is a director of St Modwen. To complete the picture Grimley JR Eve, as well as acting for the Home Office, also act as agents for Marchington Properties and St Modwen.

The Marchington Planning Action Group wants to know why the council changed its mind and why public money could be used to subsidise a private development.

Group members are also angry because their councillor, Mr Snow, owns some of the land earmarked for development. Acknowledging his vested interest, Mr Snow — vice-chairman of the planning committee — has played no part in debates on the issue and has left the people of Marchington without a voice on the council on the most pressing issue facing their community.

FRATRICIDE may be about to break out between workers and management at Transport House, home of the Transport & General Workers' Union, Britain's biggest.

The Dave and Deirdre Sparts employed at Smith Square, Westminster, are furious at their bosses' apparent failure to carry out health and safety risk assessments.

A leaked memo to the union's administrative officer, Brother R.Collins, storms: "As a trade union we should be setting a model example... instead we have written to highlight your failure to carry out these Risk Assessments and that, as such, the TGWU as an employer are [sic] in breach of the law."

The memo continues: "We find it paradoxical that the largest Trade Union in the United Kingdom, which launched an improved health and safety service for members in 1989... seems so lackadaisical in its attitude and performance when it comes to its own employees."

Health and safety reps have called for an immediate top level meeting with Brother Ron Todd for whom all this must be very embarrassing.

MARK THATCHER — OUT OF AFRICA

WHILE his mother plans her visit to South Africa (having no doubt claimed credit for the anticipated release of Nelson Mandela), Mark Thatcher has once again been busy pursuing his burgeoning business interests with the apartheid regime.

Junior was earlier this month reported to be in Johannesburg, accompanied by French businessman Jean Yves Ollivier, believed to represent industrial group Matra. Mark Thatcher, thanks to his mother, has good connections with the South African defence minister, General Magnus Malan.

As reported in *Eye* 722, Thatcher met with representatives of Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi in Malan's Pretoria home last June. The Thatcher link to Savimbi was Houston oil man Oscar Wyatt, a good friend of Savimbi and South Africa. Ollivier has close links to a number of former members of the French intelligence service, the DGSE. He is also close to a senior official in the private office of Jacques Chirac, the mayor of Paris and no stranger to African politics. Ollivier is well known in South African government circles and has been a visitor to those African countries that enjoy friendly relations with Pretoria. His business interests range from industrial groups like Matra through oil and mining to tourism.

campain

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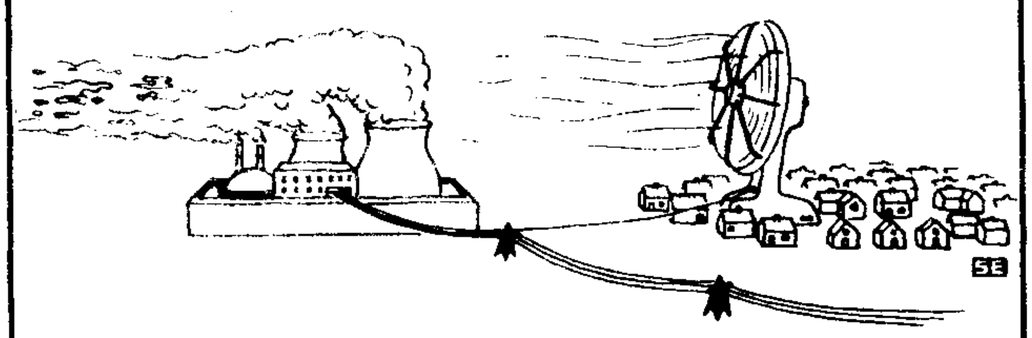
Contributor: Sharon Gristle.

All dismal advertising gratefully received.

DOWN ON THE FARM



with 'Old Muckspreader'

HEARING subsidy minister John Gummer's proposals to help organic farmers, you might think he was seriously concerned to cut the sickening overuse of pesticides on British farms. Yet his own officials are blocking the introduction of a product that could dramatically reduce the use of spray chemicals.

The irony is that MAFF bureaucrats are using pesticide safety legislation to squash the new product. And the only possible explanation is that they are too scared of upsetting their friends in the agrochemical industry — currently pocketing around £300 million a year by flogging poison to farmers.

The product that has apparently embarrassed the MAFF's guardians of the public good is known as Codacide Oil. It is a natural vegetable oil, which means it is about as harmful as the sunflower oil the health conscious now use in their cooking. When it is mixed with pesticides, it wraps the chemical molecules in tiny capsules which stick to plant leaves instead of running off. As a result, far less of the chemical pesticide is needed to kill the weed or pest.

The agrochemical industry is quite happy to see crop spraying remain highly inefficient: only 2 per cent of applied pesticides actually kill the target plant or insect. The rest drifts across to the neighbour's tomatoes or drains through the soil to contaminate the water table stream. It is this "wastage" that accounts for the chemical companies' huge profits.

Codacide Oil looks like it could end this lucrative wheeze. It makes spraying much more effective and would cut the amount of pesticide needed by at least half. For some crops the reduction is even more spectacular. For apples and pears, for example, sprays containing only *one eighth* the current recommended rate have been found to be equally effective. In Africa, insecticides used at one tenth the current rate have been found to kill off locusts.

Apart from reducing pollution of our food and countryside, the oil could save farmers hundreds of pounds an acre in chemical costs. It is also likely to cost the chemical companies millions of pounds in lost profits.

One would expect a government department that is concerned with food safety and the environment to welcome such a product. *Yet the safety watchdogs at MAFF have been refusing to give it clearance since 1983.* It seems that the ministry's pesticide registration department — which cheerfully endorses the use of organophosphorous poisons on food crops — refuses to countenance the use of a harmless vegetable oil.

During the 1986 Commons debate of the Government's much-vaunted pesticide safety legislation, oil adjuvants like Codacide Oil were championed by no lesser persons than Sir Eldon Griffiths and the late Brynmor John. After the debate, MAFF granted limited clearance for the product on cereals and sugar beet alone. But since then the bureaucrats have consistently blocked its use on any other crops. For around 18 months they have even refused to answer letters from the company developing it.

This unwarranted obstruction of Codacide Oil proves that while minister Gummer argues that food safety is one of his department's chief concerns, and while MAFF officials claim to act fearlessly and impartially in licensing new pesticides, it is of course still big business that pulls the strings — and unnecessary pesticide residues continue to contaminate our food, drinking water and milk.

Sally Deedes

BRITISH Telecom might not be as stupid as everybody thinks it is judging by the nice little earner it has discovered with its phone cards.

Over the last three years the number of public call boxes converted to take the cards rose from 8 per cent to more than 30 per cent in Greater London and almost 20 per cent in the rest of the country.

BT says the system is installed largely because it costs less to maintain and reduces the risk of vandalism and theft attacks. What it does not say is that it has hit upon an excellent way to obtain money for a service before having to provide that service. In many cases of course it will never have to provide the service as people lose cards or only use a small part of them.

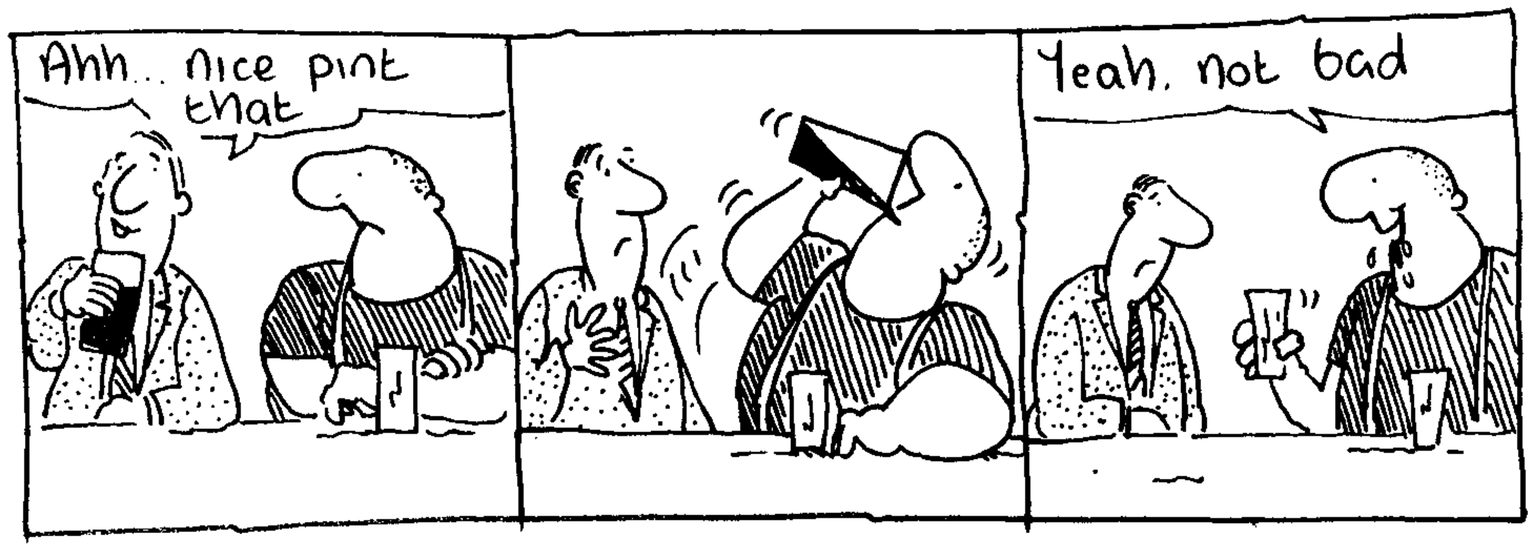
BT is cagey about the ratio of receipts to card usage and maintains that no real breakdown has been made although, when pressed, a spokesman admitted that it was profiting "marginally". Mercury Telecom, whose phones operate solely on the card system, estimates that only 60p in every pound is spent.

Those without a phone, students and others who spend time working away from home often buy cards and keep them as a stand-by — all money in BT's pocket.

BT told me it is planning to phase out the £1.00 card "as it costs more to distribute than we make". In the capital it will introduce £5 and £10 cards — "we feel that London has traded up", I was told.

Along with the abolition of the 2p and 5p slots on coin boxes and BT's admission that it sends out final demands in hot pursuit of its telephone bills as "we need the money", shareholders can no doubt look forward to a whopping great dividend.

HUSBAND



Private Eye

Letters

Head buttock

Sir,

The Pony Express brings news that you have again trotted out the ancient libels that I tend to murder my publishers, though with the main characters ambitiously changed. Once more this is utter twaddle and I will be addressing the more ludicrous points in another letter. Nor was I at any time in Mauritius in 1987, or for that matter the entire southern hemisphere. But I am glad to hear you have a picture of my bottom. Although I say it myself it is quite a wonderful bottom and I hope the snap brings you hours of innocent fun. Enough, I must get back to the white powder mountains. But please don't worry, normal hostilities will be resumed as soon as possible.

Have a really special day now,
PAUL PICKERING,

Vail, Colorado.

Plonker

Sir,

It is true (Eye 732) that I was not headbutted by Paul Pickering, but I wish I'd had the backing of the Sixth Army (more handy than the Sixth Fleet since I live inland) when, in my house, Mr Pickering broke a chair, a glass and then — goddamnit! — a half-full bottle of wine and threatened a friend of mine with it. When my friend left, considering discretion etc, and rang the Battle branch of Inspector Knacker's empire, Mr Pickering took out his frustration on my bookshelves muttering that he'd never been so close to killing anyone in his life.

Inspector Knacker's men arrived after Mr Pickering had been persuaded into his car and driven away. They took note of the damage and pronounced it the work of a "temperamental author".

Yours etc,
VICTORIA PETRIE-HAY,

Bodiam, E Sussex.

Truly apaulin'

Sir,

Your article on Paul Pickering (Eye 731) alleged that Pickering smashed a bottle of Jack Daniels and held it to my throat. This is untrue.

Yours sincerely,
JONATHAN BURNHAM,

London NW1.

Bitter blowjob

Sir,

I don't know why you publish work by bitter, frustrated peabrains like the author of "Lit Review" (19 Jan). I will only say this: if he can find one piece of fiction in British Cosmopolitan from the past five years which mentions a blow-job, I will buy him a bottle of champagne (vintage). If I receive no reply from him to this offer, he — and you — will know that he's a liar as well as an idiot.

Yours,
EMMA DALLY
(Assistant & Literary Editor),

Cosmopolitan, London W1.

Foul

Sir,

A very old lady am I
Who loves to read Private Eye.
I don't like it a bit
*When you print words like sh**,*
*So with **** why not modify?*
And purify vox populi!

ANON,

Perth.

Yizhack

Sir,

After citing Robert Maxwell's nauseously grovelling tributes to Kadar, Todor Zhivkov, Jaruzelski and Ceausescu (PE, January 5) you ask: "...with all his favourite mass-murderers cast into the wilderness, to whom can he now toady?".

Unfortunately, another of "Cap'n Bob's" heroes is still around, and killing. In March last year, Maxwell loyally attended a gathering of "solidarity with Israel", widely boycotted by many important Jewish figures who saw it as a cheer-rally for Yitzhak Shamir.

At this gathering, Shamir complained that the Israeli media were "helping the enemy" by carrying material which damaged his government. Maxwell promptly got on to the evening paper Ma'ariv, in which he holds a large stake, remonstrating with its editor over a report of Shamir's row with his intelligence chiefs. (They had advised that Israel might have to talk with the PLO).

The editor protested that his story was true. (Since when has that been a defence?) Staff at the liberal Jerusalem Post, seeing what was happening, protested a threatened Maxwell take-over, saying it would imperil their independence.

In case this might be written off as a one-off episode in financial clout combined with political naivety, we may add that on New Year's Day, the Daily Mirror strongly attacked General Ezer Weizman for his "unrealistic" ideas on peace, and for "talking to the PLO in defiance of Israeli law".

Still, considering the fate of Maxwell's other idols, perhaps his support for Shamir should give some optimism to those of us who want a just and peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict.

Yours,
CHARLES POTTINS,
Jewish Socialists' Group, London WC1.

Brian damage

Sir,

A few facts concerning your Dave Allen Award (2) in the last edition about the recent departure of Paul Smith from the Daily Star.

Firstly, Graham Jones is not talentless. As a journalist he has a record which many in Fleet Street would envy — including Paul Smith. Mr Jones is one of the best news editors I have known in over 30 years in journalism.

Secondly, for the record, it was my decision as to who was to become northern news editor of the Daily Star and I only informed Mr Jones of that decision well after this so-called celebratory lunch.

Thirdly, as to Paul Smith, anyone who shouts and swears at his boss in public deserves all he gets. He should consider himself lucky that he was discharged with three months' pay.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN HITCHEN,
Editor, Daily Star.

"Pardon me, boys, is this the Chatanooga choo-choo?"

Anagram

Sir,

I was distraught to read that the abysmal That's Life was about to rear its ugly head on our screens once more. Yet again, it is to be presented by that dreadful Esther Rantzen who is about as caring as Kenneth Clarke and as funny as global warming.

It appears to me that the entire programme should be summed up in an anagram of the title: "FLAT SHITE"

Yours sincerely,
SONJA WHINCUP (Miss),
Liverpool.

Tory to boot

Sir,

I hate to disillusion Backbiter, but although Michael Jopling is indeed the MP for Westmorland and Lonsdale, and a good Tory to boot, he does not enjoy the backing of a true-blue district council. South Lakeland District Council is in fact balanced, the blue being liberally streaked with Democrat yellow, rose-red, and myriad shades of Independent.

The amendment to which he refers had all-party support on the council — votes for district councillors don't come from second homeowners, and, as the poll-tax legislation stands, neither does much of the council's income.

Yours faithfully,
HELEN BUCKINGHAM.
Great Billing, Northampton.

Irony Lost

Sir,

The politics of the Eye have always been a bit wacky but Old Muckspreader's description of Rechem as "a virtuous multinational" was something special.

Could this be the same Rechem which was told by the Commons Select Committee on Welsh Affairs on 13 December to pull itself together and carry out a proper public inquiry into allegations of toxic PCB emissions from its waste incineration plant at Pontypool? Was it not Welsh Tory MP Keith Raffan who told the angelic firm that "We'll have a united Europe before you lot get together"? Did a report from the Pollution Inspectorate not find high levels of PCBs in the soil around the Rechem plant leading a local MP to warn that South East Wales was in danger of becoming "a toxic waste dustbin"?

Finally, does the Eye, of all organs, regard the injunctions taken out by Rechem (and subsequently overturned by the courts) to stop the local council even discussing the issue of pollution from the plant, and the still operative injunctions against Express Newspapers, Cardiff Broadcasting Company, Western Mail and Echo, various Greenpeace campaigners, the BBC, Channel 4, and the Grauniad, as "virtuous" conduct?

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS MURRAY,
Presteigne, Powys.

Irony Lost (II)

Sir,

Do you really have your "Own Correspondent" who writes from Johannesburg (page 14 of issue 733)? Or was the information in the article supplied from BOSS or other South African Governmental source? If there is such a correspondent, it would be interesting to know what journalistic connections he/she has and, in particular, what role they have in the apartheid set-up. What would the correspondent's own personal life-style have been during the years that Nelson Mandela was taking a selfless and courageous stand against the injustices of apartheid, was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment, keeping firm the principles for which he was imprisoned?

What would prompt such a "journalist" to choose, out of all the facts which could be reported on the tragic happenings in South Africa, to write malicious and gossipy nonsense about Nelson Mandela and a pack of lies about "improvements" in life there? What a distorted view of life they must have, to write: "Even more important... Mike Gatting..." etc! (Mike Gatting, who he, in the history of South Africa?)

"It is said that he (Mandela)... opted for comfortable accommodation... swimming pool, television, radio and it is suspected, black domestic help." Well, who wouldn't, after Robbins Island prison? Who cares if this tittle-tattle is true or not? One dismisses journalism which relies on "it is said" and "it is suspected" and, anyway, who says? who suspects? "ANC leaders remind us..." Who is us? What arrogance, from an anonymous correspondent, to pontificate about an international hero, "Mandela must recognise that..." and refer to this brave and unselfish human being as "the wily Mandela" and to his "power box" (whatever that may be) ...

... The whole purpose of the article is a disgrace, but what is unforgivable is that you should have printed it.

Not yours any more,
LELAGE BOWMAN,
Finchley, London N3.

PS: I had to fish my copy of Private Eye out of the rubbish bin in order to check on the quotes for this letter.

Lookalike

Judge Davies

Worsthorne

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between libel defendant Peregrine Worsthorne and Mr Justice Michael Davies? I wonder if by any chance they are related? I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
ENA B. MAXWELL (Mrs),.
Headington Hall, Oxford.

Diplomatic immunity

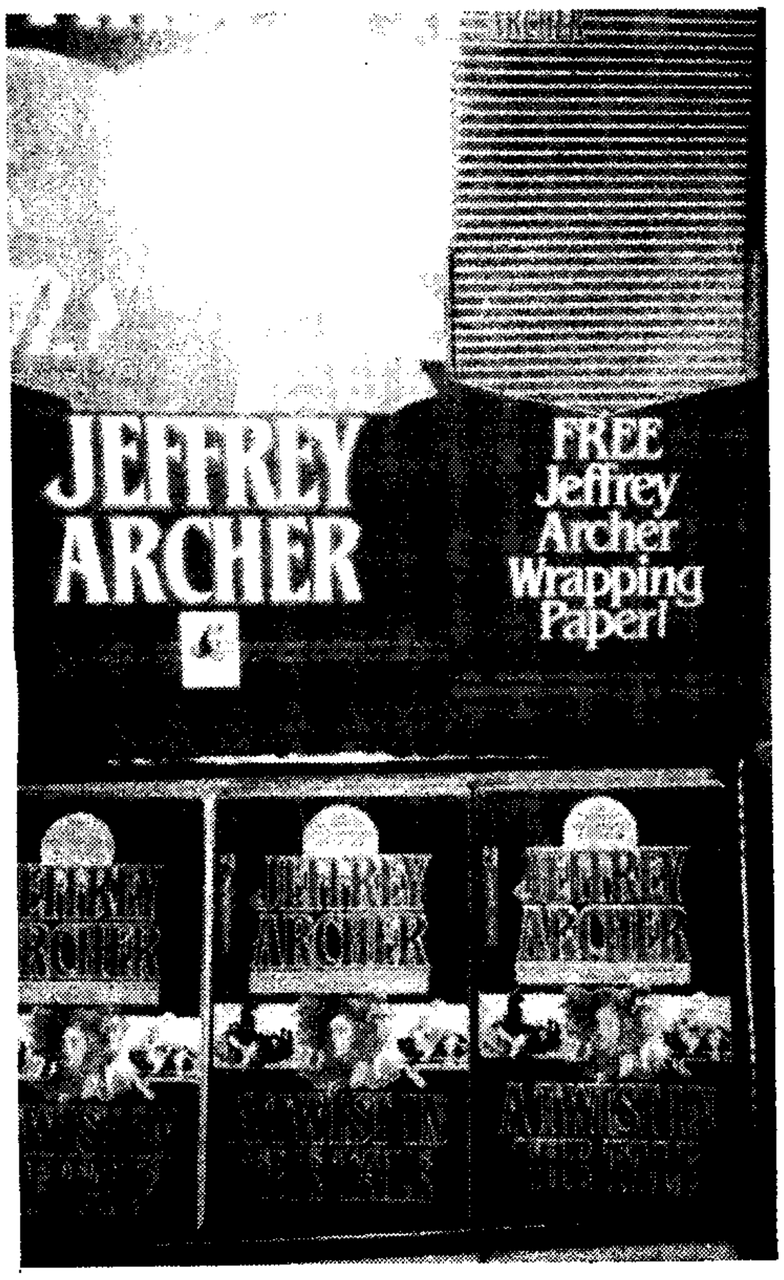
Sir,

As a United Nations staff member too scared of an arbitrary administration to state his name, I want to thank you for running the item on my Chinese colleagues. On the whole, the press has been uninterested in what seems to be a most newsworthy story.

But Chinese diplomats are anything but "furious" about the illegal treatment of staff members from The People's Republic; it is fellow members of the Secretariat staff who are protesting this situation.

ANON,
Hotel Russell, London WC1.

I-SPY *Nashville Airport, Tennessee*



Submitted by Tony Fleck. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Holiday camp

Etavirp Yee,

May I enter the Dave Allen Award competition? The following is from my autobiography, It Ain't Necessarily So.

"Duke Ellington and I went to the Grand Terrace one night and Earl Hines asked us to play a duet. Afterwards Duke said: 'I want you to meet somebody,' and took me to a ringside table where a lady was sitting alone.

" 'Larry,' said Duke, 'meet Billie Holiday.' I put out my hand and said, 'How do you do?'

" 'Man,' said Miss Holiday, 'you don't play that fuckin' thing, you **sing** *it.'"*

A gold mini-mouthorgan to anyone who can tell or write that anecdote by eliminating the "fuckin'" and still retain the impact.

Yours censoriously,
LARRY ADLER,

London W1.

PS: Shouldn't there also be a Ken Tynan Award, a Bill Grundy Award and even a Peregrine Worsthorne Award? Surely they all worked just as hard as Mr Allen.

Prevailing wind

Sir,

I am in complete agreement with "Piloti's" opinion of the Things at the Mound. The disabled toilet is at least useful. The "Temple" isn't, not even as a shelter from the rain thanks to its open sides and our prevailing wind. Please point out to "Piloti", however, that we have not had a **loch** *between the Old and New Towns for many a generation. The predecessors of Lothian District Council had it drained for a railway line (still there) which they then concealed as best they could by creating Princes Street Gardens. Just how old is "Piloti", anyway, and when did he/she last visit Edinburgh? The Nor' Loch hasn't been there for about 150 years.*

Yours faithfully,
KATHLEEN GLANCY,

Edinburgh.

Aids memoire

Sir,

I am returning the copy of Private Eye just bought this morning. I read no further than the first inside page. This is the first time I have been really disgusted by anything in your magazine, but it will be the last as it is the last copy I shall buy. We have been regular readers up to now, including the children. Honestly, would you want your children to read this advert?

Yours sincerely,
C. FLYNN,

London N12.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"The Spirella corset factory is closing because the bottom has dropped out of the market."

ANGLIA TV
(R.G. Phillips)

"Neutrality doesn't make sense — who are they neutral against?"

DENNIS HEALEY, Question Time
(Anon)

"Now the All Blacks thunderbolt is moving slowly forward..."

IAN ROBERTSON, BBC World Service
(R.K. Trengove)

"I'm not going to predict what I'm gonna do, but I'm gonna come out there the winner."

FRANK BRUNO, Radio 1
(Malcolm Mackinnon)

"Whoever wins the first frame will be one frame up."

STEVE DAVIS, Radio 4
(David Hobbs)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

Letter from **Malaysia**

from Our Own Correspondent

IT DOES get very steamy out here. Never more so than around our deputy-speaker in Parliament, Mr D.P. Vijandran, who sadly resigned last week.

Indeed, shameful allegations of gross impropriety have been levelled against him by an opposition MP, Karpal Singh, who claimed that he had a videotape of the venerable ex-deputy speaker surrounded by 11 young women in all manner of obscene and compromising positions.

The sex scandal began just before Christmas when Singh handed documents over to the police which contained photographs and the names of the 11 lucky ladies. He added to the growing scandal by alleging that four of the ladies involved were members of the governing party, one of whom was actually the national leader of the party's women's youth movement.

To the astonishment of the average Malaysian, he went on to say that a prominent woman newsreader was part of the group and that the beloved ex-deputy speaker played the part of a "male actor" having sexual intercourse with her.

Of course my fellow countrymen are not slow to realise that there is a bob or two to be made from vice, so it came as little surprise to find that the photos and videos were quickly becoming a hot selling item around Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh.

In the time honoured manner of all politicians confronted by a scandal, our government initiated enquiries into the theft of the tapes — not into what the ex-deputy speaker might have been doing in them.

People, however, have been arrested and released without charge for the following reason: our attorney-general, Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman, ordered the destruction of the tapes on the instructions of the ex-deputy speaker on the spurious grounds that the property belonged to the man it was stolen from and as there was no property around any more, no one could be charged with theft. A neat solution you may think — except for the marketplace factor.

The opposition has predictably accused the attorney-general of a cover-up and demanded a royal commission of enquiry into the whole affair.

Naturally Mr Vijandran and the attorney-general are vexed beyond belief by the affront of the opposition in making such a request, and they claim to have issued proceedings against Karpal Singh for defamation.

The problem, however, is that there is some considerable difficulty in finding the "writs" within the system as Karpal Singh has not yet been served with them. He begs to be and openly questions the parties as to where his writ is. This one seems set to run and run.

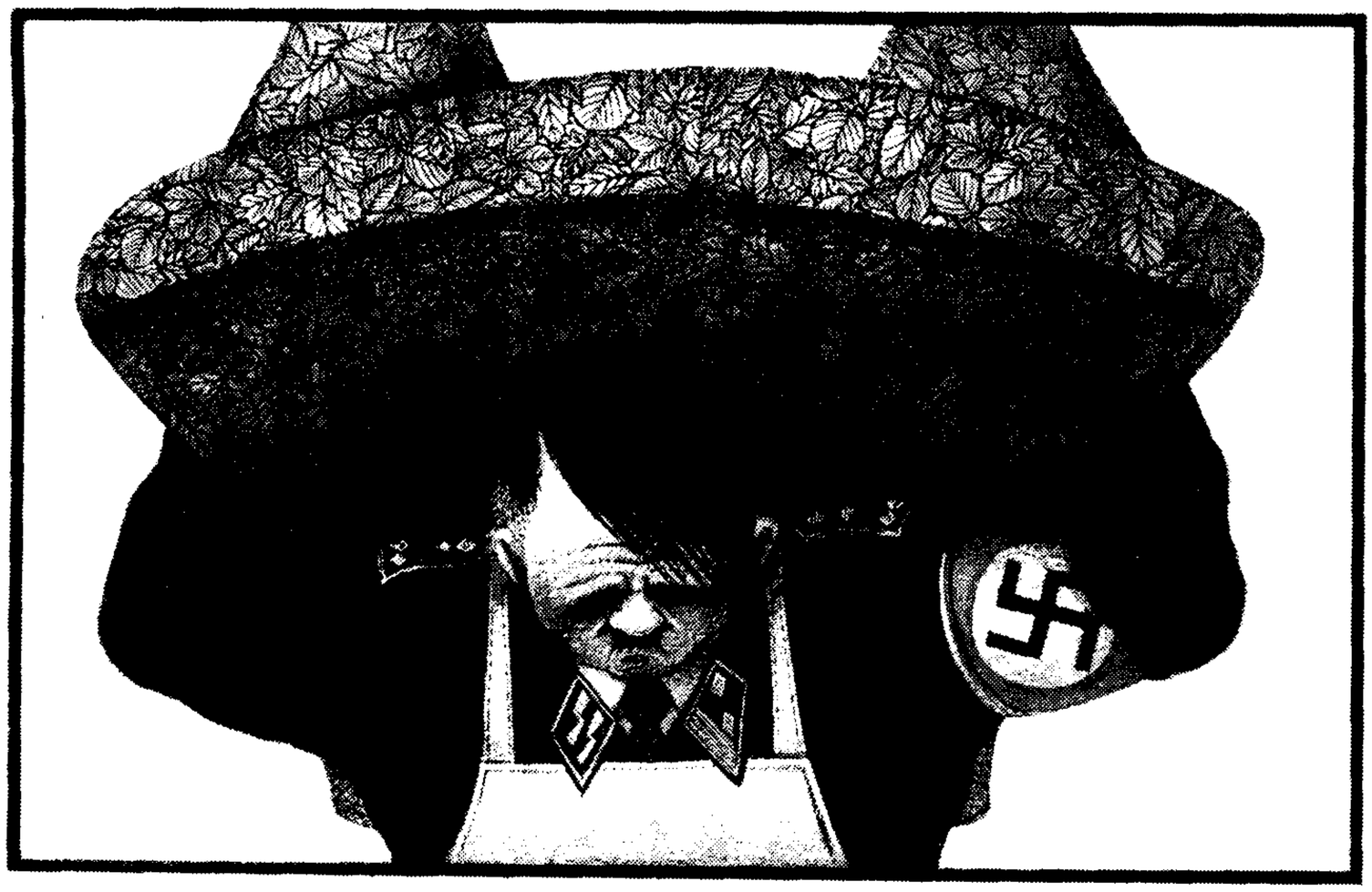
Postcard from the **UN**

WHEN staff join the UN, they take an oath that they will not take instructions from their national governments — their responsibility is to the UN's secretary-general.

As the *Eye* reported (no 732), Javier Perez de Cuellar does not feel the same responsibility to the UN's Chinese staff whose contracts he has refused to renew in case he offends the Peking gerontocracy. Already, some of those suspected of wanting to stay — and who can blame them? — have had letters from home suggesting that family honour and welfare may suffer as a result.

The control Peking exercises over its nationals is only now becoming clear. In April 1988 Zhang Liansheng, a Chinese foreign ministry accountant, lectured Chinese UN staff on their duties "any UN employee must hand in all his income" to the Chinese government, including retirement benefits, petty cash allowances for senior officers, and even gifts of cigarettes and food.

In return, they are paid a tiny amount. They are allowed a subscription to *Time* magazine and their allowances in New York include $2 a day for transport and even allows some leeway for fast living: "there are four places that can be visited in New York, one is the World Trade Centre, the other is the Metropolitan Museum, next is the Statue of Liberty, and the Intrepid Carrier. For the entrance fees of these four places you may get one reimbursement during your contact period".



CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

TRUE STORIES

ILLUMINATED BY BERT KITCHEN

REMANDED on bail having been charged with the theft of two tins of dog food, Mr Anthony Posten, a removal man from Middlesbrough, said that he cultivated a Hitler-style haircut, dressed in the uniform of an SS man and called himself Axel Hoffman after one of the Nazi mass murderers "in order to increase his popularity with the local people".

A SPOKESMAN for Miss Trisha Ward's musical production *Forever Yours* said: "The preview was cancelled because the show's musical director, David Oliver, fell ill and was forbidden to conduct from the pit while on a drip, supported by his nurse-wife, and with an ambulance ticking over at the stage door. However, as Trish wrote *Nightshriek* — a musical *Macbeth* — after four years of major surgery, and followed up with *Behold the Nun*, while still recovering, we can be sure that this setback will not stop her fighting on."

ADDRESSING the Environmental Protection Agency's Baltimore conference, Professor Haslon Kryber said: "There are approximately 3.1 billion managed ruminants on earth and studies show that their natural emissions of gas make a significant contribution to the greenhouse effect. Sheep, goats and buffalo are all great methane blowers and burpers, but it is the average American dairy cow's natural flatulence output of up to 55 kilograms of methane each year that make this a must-solve problem.

"EPA scientists are crafting proposals to subvert this cud-plus global warming effect, but the poorer countries produce poorer ruminants that emit even more methane and about them something must be done at once."

EVICTED from his council house and obliged to live with his married daughter Sammy, "whom I have always disliked", Mr Samuel Dele (83), a retired train-driver from Old Tafara, said:

"The council's Development Committee have evicted me because I refused to pay an extra $17.50 a year for the introduction of a flush toilet system to my house. On consulting my records I discovered that I have been paying 50 cents a month for the flush toilet system since 1957.

"Therefore I am entitled to well over 12 years of free flush-toileting which, all things considered, I am unlikely to enjoy. This is the basis of my protest."

COMMENTING on the US army's newly developed $5 billion Divad anti-aircraft cannon, described by military experts as "the most efficient gun in world history", Mr Dave Zik, one of its designers, said in his retirement speech:

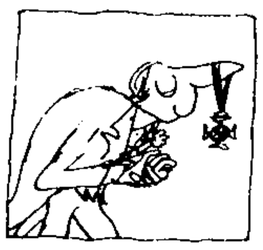
"There remain one or two snags. The gun does not work in rain, its radar signal gives its position away and, when its computer was switched on for a recent demonstration, it swung off target and on to the viewing stands — so we all had to run for it."

GIVING evidence to the coroner's court, Miss Wallace Timm said: "I was in the Victoria Bar at the Grand when Bob Traley came in, ordered a lager, and used it to swallow down a handful of pills. We were quite busy at the time and there was sport on TV. After a while Bob collapsed, but nobody paid any attention because he was a regular."

INFORMATION: Middlesbrough Evening Gazette 9.9.89; The Stage 30.11.89; Baltimore Sun 23.11.89; Harare Sunday Mail 7.11.89; US Military Hardware, December 89; Hartlepool Mail 21.11.89.

MONITORS: Phil Small, Amy Kampe, Alan Wheatley, D.J. Morris, Dennis Bailey, N.P. Clarke.

O.B.N.



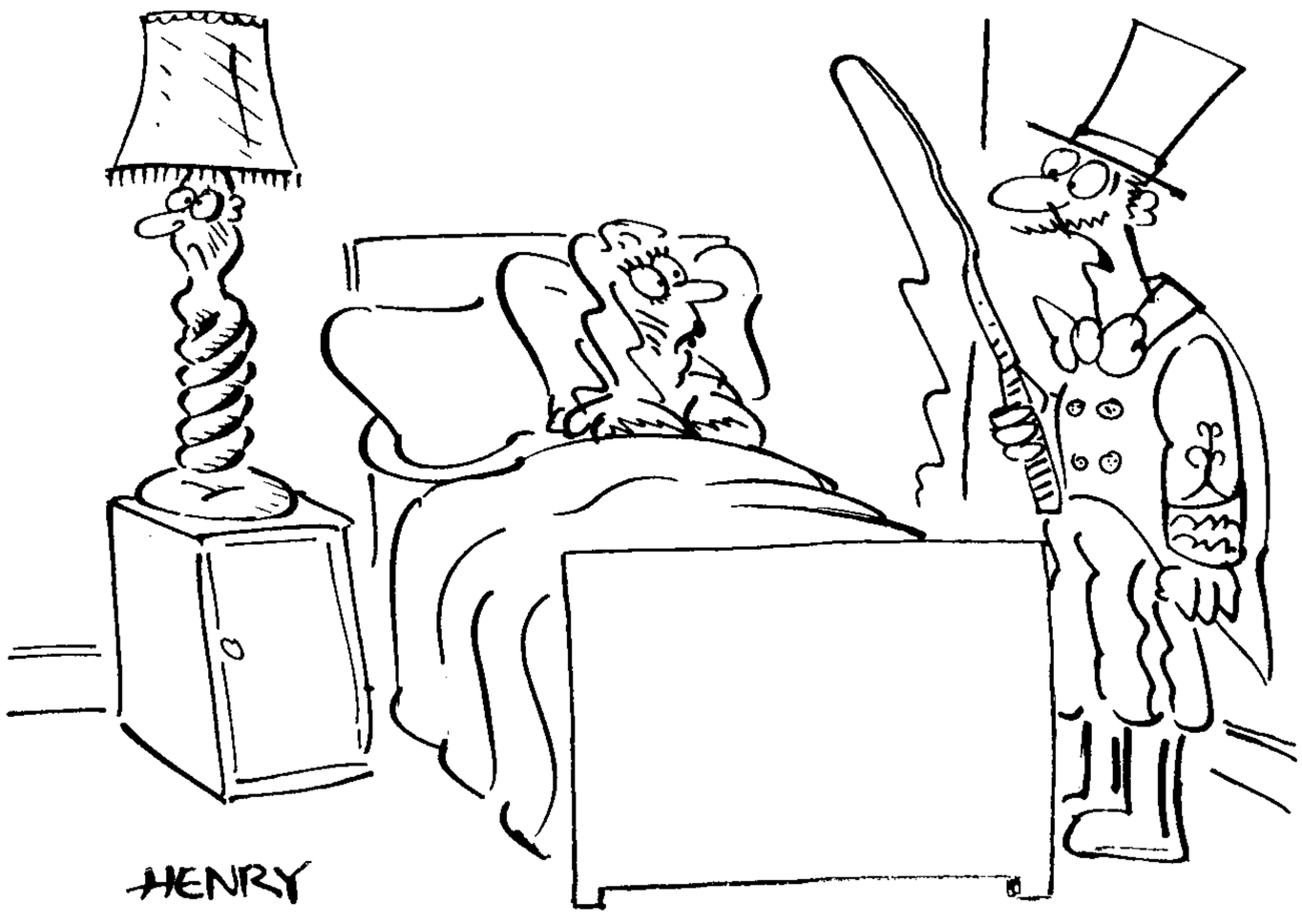
The most adored, the most popular, the most glamorous young woman in the world still anxiously asks (as she did after her recent triumphal tour of the Big Apple, "was I alright?", "did I do it properly?"...

Like so many beautiful women HRH Princess Diana seems to find that the very dazzle that has the world bewitched, the set of features that makes a bad photograph impossible can sometimes get in the way. When you are this flawlessly gorgeous, when you only have to smile to light up a room then being taken seriously as a hard working and concerned member of the Royal Family takes a bad second place.

High Life magazine

Contributor: Miranda Chaplin

£10 paid for similar contributions put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.



"Rita, there are rumours about you and our contortionist..."

10 Downing Street
Whitehall

Dear Bill,

I have been trying to keep out of range of the Gamma Rays since the ID cards issue blew up again. You recall the trouble we were in before, after she sent Hurd out onto the doorstep to announce that strong measures would be taken to stem the tide of hooliganism? The result was her crazy ID card scheme. I told her, as I may say did several million other people, that it was totally pointless to expect those yobbos and skinheads to queue up outside the ground with little bits of plastic, but she wouldn't hear a word against the idea. Anyway, finally this striped-trousered judge, who has been looking into the shambles that is soccer, has come out very firmly against it. Cue for the Smellysocks to rise as a man and scream for her to start eating her words which needless to say she refused to do.

In the circs, I deemed it only prudent to refrain from any hint of "I told you so". (Incidentally, you may have seen in the small print that that bearded Prat Branson, out of whose rear quarters at one time the sun was thought to shine has folded up his Anti-Litter League which the Boss had entrusted with the job of cleaning up Britain. So another scrawny old chicken has come home to roost).

Poor Mrs Van der Kaffirbasher has sent a somewhat desperate SOS asking me to look out for "a nice bungalow-style property in downtown Dulwich, ideally with separate maid quarters and kennel facilities for my darling Rotties". She blames the boss for her failure to stand up to these "Coons and Commies in the Commonwealth" who have brought about the downfall of her homeland.

"The last straw, dear Denis, is the way the traitor Van der Klerk has failed completely to supervise your cricket tour. It grieves my heart, Denis, to see brave Mike Gatting and his men being harassed wherever they go by crowds of chattering monkeys dancing up and down with their placards. I tell you in the days of Dr Verwoerd (God rest his noble soul) it would never have been allowed to happen. And now that they are going to allow the kaffirs to buy land in our special white areas that is why, Denis, Horst and I have decided to spend our twilight years in Great Britain as your neighbours, for it truly breaks our heart to see what is being done to this beautiful country in the name of progress."

Talking of Dulwich I have been forced to put my foot down after Furniss pointed out that thanks to Major's incompetence and total failure to bring down interest rates the value of the property had fallen by at least 20% – Furniss said it made no sense at all to have a lot of money tied up in a diminishing asset and that after seeing the boss on Wogan it was quite obvious she was going to carry on until she dropped and that I should put Dulwich up for sale and put our names down for a service flat which had special facilities for the senile and incontinent. I said I would be prepared to consider such a contingency if somewhere could be found within staggering distance of the RAC. Anyway, I am going to have a drink with Maurice's estate agent friend Mr Goldsack on Tuesday to talk it over.

Talking of Maurice, I had a call from that nursing home near Tonbridge to say that he had been re-admitted suffering from head wounds. Apparently when the Great Gale struck he was in his cellar trying to find my Christmas present. All the lights went out leaving him to grope about in the pitch dark. Eventually he found a bottle, but when he took a swig, it turned out to be paraffin. Choking and spluttering with nausea and fury combined, he shot out of the house only to be struck on the head by his satellite dish which had been blown loose by the hurricane force winds.

Yours, aye,

Denis

EXCLUSIVE TO THE OBSERVER

'How I whanged my donger in the Footlights'

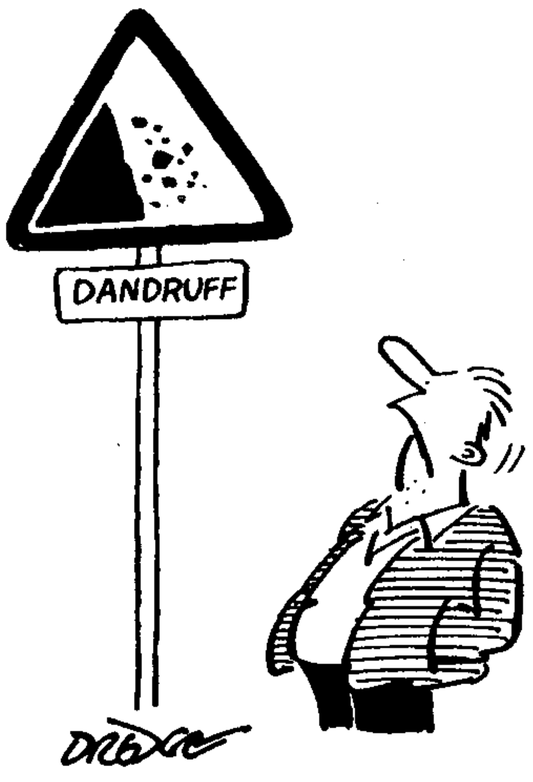
Pt. 94 of Clive James's hilarious memoirs recalls his Cambridge career and is serialised by the *Observer* in the hope that it will persuade someone to buy it instead of the *Sunday Indie*. Now read on...

FOR a lad raised in a Melbourne suburb which had about as much culture as Sheena Easton's underwear Cambridge was a shock, I can tell you.

Imagine yours truly, twenty-four and full of the joys of the mind, sitting at the feet of F.R. Leavis, a man whose intellect spanned a great deal more than the Sydney Harbour Bridge on a wet Friday.

When he lectured on Lawrence to a packed Fitzwilliam Hall, zing went the strings of my heart.

And ping went the buttons on my flies when I found myself next to the gorgeous undergraduette, Germaine Randy, who later became the intellectual equivalent of a cross between the Crown Prince of Wittelsbach and Barry Humphries on speed with a wallaby in his trousers and a ton of rhino horn slipped into his billabong. It was actually Proust who said of Germaine that... *(That's enough James. Ed.)*



IN THE COURTS

The case was resumed today, before Mr Justice Cocklecarrot, of Neill and Times Newspapers Ltd v. Worthless and the Sunday Telegraph.

SIR RAMPTON BATMAN QC *(for Mr Neill):* My lord, my client, the former Managing Director of the Dirty Digger Dish Co, is one of the most distinguished figures in journalism today. It would be hard to imagine a graver libel than to suggest that such a hugely respected person as Sir Andrew Neill should associate in any way, knowingly, with a lady of easy virtue. And yet this is the allegation that was brought against my client by the defendant Sir Perishing Worthless, in his article "These Bonking Editors Should Be Strung Up", published in the *Sunday Telegraph* on 23rd March 1981.

MR JUSTICE COCKLE-CASSOCK *(for it is he):* Perhaps you could help me, Sir Rampton. I cannot seem to find any mention of Cossacks in the bundle!

(Court erupts into sycophantic laughter at the first, but by no means the last, example of Mr Justice Cockledavies's now legendary wit)

SIR RAMPTON: Mr Neill, would you please tell the Court how you first became acquainted with Miss Pamella Bordello?

MR BRILLO: I remember it well. I had spent a hard day at work writing an editorial for the *Sunday Times* on the inestimable benefits that would accrue to the nation from the introduction of satellite television, and in order to relax I went along to Tarts Club in Filth Street, where I have been a member for several years.

JUDGE COCKITUPAGAIN: I am not sure that I am familiar with the particular establishment you mention. Is it like the Garrick?

SIR RAMPTON: My lord, it is not exactly like unto the Garrick, in that none of the waiters wear ties, or indeed clothes. But, I assure you, my lord, that the regular clientele are persons of the utmost distinction and respectability, including as they do Mr Jeffrey Archer, Mr Spigismond Topes, the well-known popular singer, and Mr Abraham Wargs, the editor of the well known literary review, *Bonks and Bonkmen.*

JUSTICE COCKLECASSOCK: Pray permit your witness to tell his own story, Sir Rampton.

SIR RAMPTON: Indeed, my lord. Sir Brillo, please tell the court in your own words the circumstances in which you were introduced to Miss Bordello.

MR DISH: I was sitting enjoying a glass of champagne, when up to my table comes this delightful young lady of Asian origin. She was, my lord, a vision of unspoiled innocence. I could tell at once that she was of impeccable breeding, outstanding intelligence and would mix without embarrassment with my highly-placed friends in government and the media. And she had terrific tits.

SIR RAMPTON: And what did Miss Bordello say to you?

MR DISH: She said: "Fancy an Indian?"

SIR RAMPTON: And what were your feelings at this moment? Can you recall them?

MR PAD: Indeed I can, your worship. I said to myself, Brillo old boy, this is your lucky night. This little bimbo is a right goer, and no mistake.

MR JUSTICE COCKER-KNICKER: Pray tell me, what is a bimbo?

SIR BRILLO: It is a piece of crumpet, my lord.

MR JUSTICE COCKALEEKIE: A kind of muffin, you mean. We often have them at the Garrick. So these toasted comestibles are also obtainable at the Tarts Club?

SIR RAMPTON: Indeed, my lord. Mr Pad, please tell the court whether you did indeed go for an Indian meal with Miss Bordella?

MR PAD: I did not. Like all good journalists, I made my excuses and came.

(Earlier the court had been read extracts from the leading article in the Sunday Telegraph which had given rise to the action, describing Mr Brillo Pad, and his opposite number Mr "Dirty Don" Trelford of the Observer-on-Thursday, as a "couple of licentious boulevardiers who are in danger of bringing the whole profession of journalism into disrepute". "The duty of the editor of a Sunday newspaper," Sir Perishing had written, "is to dine with the Archbishop of Canterbury or have lunch with the heir to the throne, and never ever to betray the confidences vouchsafed to him by the highest and mightiest in the land. This solemn trust has been flagrantly besmirched by these two salacious spivs in their shiny suits and suede shoes, blow-drying their hair in the lavatories of some of the sleaziest clip-joints in the metropolis, before embarking on an orgiastic odyssey of self-gratification and unabashed hedonism." After lunch the court heard how the Editor of the Observer, Mr Don Juan Trelford, had attempted to win the favours of Miss Pornella Bondes in an effort to boost the flagging circulation of his newspaper)

SIR RAMPTON: Mr Pad, could you tell the court how Miss Bondage rebuffed the pathetic advances of your diminutive rival on the night of 12 February 1986?

MR SKY: I remember it only too clearly, your worship. There we were, in the highly respectable Legover Club, engrossed in a discussion about impact of the Community Charge, when up comes this cocky little bloke with platform heels who says: "Watch out, Andy, there's no such thing as a free dish"

MR JUSTICE COCKYTWERP: This was a reference, was it not, to Mr Murdoch's celebrated televisual device?

(Court erupts into paroxysms of toadying merriment not seen since the celebrated case of Tallstory v. Allalongtimeago)

SIR BRILLO PAD: No, your honour, he was trying to pick up my bird.

SIR RAMPTON: And what was her response to Mr Don Giovanni?

SIR BRILLO: She said: "Would you like a nice Times, ducky?"

SIR RAMPTON: Thereby proving herself a respectable reader of your newspaper?

SIR BRILLO: Exactly.

SIR RAMPTON: And would you say it was an unwise relationship for Mr Trelford to pursue because he was married?

MR BACHELOR PAD: Definitely, your honour. I never did anything wrong. It was all above board.

MR JUSTICE COCKLE-CASSOCK: You mean, "above Bordes", surely?

(Gales of laughter from barristers reach 110 mph)

MR PAD: Right on, your squire-ship. But Dirty Don was two-timing his missus, which to my mind is undermining the whole fabric of morality in our society. I mean, this man is the editor of a respectable Sunday newspaper, the sort of public figure who should be setting an example by having lunch with the Archbishop of Canterbury or the heir to the throne. What is he doing, I ask the court, cavorting around with women of easy virtue? Mind you, he never even laid a finger on her until I'd had my two penny-worth.

MR JUSTICE COCKALEEKIE: Two-penny worth, Mr Pad?

SIR RAMPTON: My client was only, of course, speaking metaphorically, my lord.

(The jury was then asked to retire to consider their verdict)

FOREMAN: What is a "verdict"?

The case continues

Me and George Melly – by Worsthorne

(Cross-examined by Sir Rampton Batman yesterday, Mr Worsthorne admitted that at public school he had frequently dressed up as a judge and enticed younger boys into his study with the promise of hot buttered toast)

JUSTICE COCKLEGARRICK: Is this the crumpet we've been hearing so much about?

SIR PERIWIG: It was all a long time ago, your honour.

SIR RAMPTON: Nevertheless, Sir Very Gay, you thought nothing of peddling an account of this salacious incident in the book *The Happiest Days of My Life*, an anthology of public school memories edited by Hugh Montgomery Massivesnob. Is that not so, Sir Perverting?

SIR POMPOUS: There were no jeunes filles at my Alma Mater, so I had to put on a wig and dance about to entertain the lads.

JUSTICE COCKLEGARRICK: We have all done the same in our time. It is nothing to be ashamed of. See you in the club at lunchtime, Perry. Whoops, strike that from the record.

SIR RAMPTON: It is true, is it not, Sir Paedophile, that you once mentioned the Dave Allen word on the television? Is that dignified behaviour from the editor of a quality Sunday newspaper?

SIR PERRY MASON: In retrospect it is possible that I was ill-advised to choose that particular word.

JUSTICE COQUILLES ST JACQUES: What word was that, Sir Rampton?

SIR RAMPTON: I would prefer the jury to leave before I mention it.

JUSTICE FUCKLECARROT: Very well. The jury may now fuck off for half an hour.

Story snatched from under mother's nose

by Our Medical Correspondent,
Cindy Pendent

A small baby story was yesterday stolen from under the nose of several hundred journalists at St Thomas's Hospital in London.

The story, which was only two weeks old, was in its mother's head, when a man believed to be seriously disturbed (and working for Rupert Murdoch) appeared and flourished a huge cheque at the mother.

She quite innocently handed over the story to Mr Filth (as he called himself) and then suddenly it disappeared.

Said one distressed journalist: "The man just walked in, bold as brass, and took the story away. It shouldn't be allowed."

The mother was, however, ecstatic. "I am delighted to have the money back."

"How do you feel?" asked a crying hackette.

"Words fail me. Read the *Sun* tomorrow."

"Oh, no! Vietnamese Wind-Surf People..."

CRICKET LATEST

Mandela Not Out

by Our Man In Kimberley With The Rottweiler And The Canister Of Tear Gas.

Gatting Mercenaries vs. Multi-Racial Progressive Based on Merit Only All-White XI

Tourists 1st Innings

M. Gatting £500,000
J. Embury £300,000
G. Dilley £200,000
I.T. Botham . .Did Not Accept Offer.

Springboks

P.D. Van der Kaffirbasher . . . . . .3 demonstrators.

DAN DIRE
PILOT OF THE FUTURE?
by HUGH STUN
AS THE NEW AEON ENTERED THE CYCLE OF DESPAIR, THE ALL POWERFUL MAGGON DETERMINED TO PRESENT A DIFFERENT IMAGE...
IT'S THE NEW SOFTER MAGGON!
SHE'S SOFTER IN THE HEAD!
YES. SHE'S JUST AN ORDINARY VENUSIAN ARCHFIEND LIKE THE REST OF US. THE SAME HOPES, FEARS, DREAMS, PLANS OF WORLD DOMINATION.
OL' TEL-A-VISION
IT'S A KINDER FACE.
YES. KINDA BOGUS.
BUT DISCORD WAS SEETHING WITHIN THE TOREEN RANKS...
WE'RE FURIOUS ABOUT POLTAX! THERE'S TALK OF RESIGNATION.
WE'RE ALL RESIGNED TO YOU GETTING YOUR OWN WAY.
HELP! IT'S AN OUTBREAK OF MAD COWARD DISEASE!
REASONABLE MAN... GETS JOB... TURNS INTO USELESS TOADY.
YOU'VE SPOTTED THE PATTEN!
MEANWHILE, COLONEL DAN DIRE AND SPACEMAN PIGBY HAD REACTIVATED THE CLOAKING DEVICE WHICH MADE THEM INVISIBLE...
COLONEL, WE HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING FOR LIGHT YEARS.
EXACTLY. WHY DO YOU THINK WE'RE SO POPULAR, YOU JUMBO JET-JOCK?
SHOULDN'T WE DECLARE OUR INTENTIONS?
I THINK IT WOULD BETTER IF WE DECLARED OUR VIDEOS, BOYO.
TOECURLIN' TRANSPORT SPOKESMEN!
ELSEWHERE IN THE GALAXY, THE FOOD PRODUCERS WERE UNDER PRESSURE...
YOUR POLICIES NEED BEEFING UP.
RIGHT. WE'LL MAKE THEM EVEN MADDER.
LOOK! I'VE EATEN THIS STUFF AND IT'S HAD NO EFFECT ON MOOOO!
YOU CAN MOAN ABOUT IT UNTIL THE COWS GO INTO A HOME.
IT'S A WHINEGUMMER!
BUT MAJOR JOHN, OUT OF CONTACT WITH GROUND CONTROL, WAS BEING INEXORABLY SUCKED INTO THE DREADED INFLATIONARY SPIRAL...
SORRY, EVERYBODY. YOU KNOW I SAID THINGS WERE BAD? WELL, NOW THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY DREADFUL. THAT'S INFLATION FOR YOU...
HELP!
..BUT SOME THINGS ARE LOOKING GOOD...
YES! BLUBBA IS LOOKING LIKE A GENIUS.
THAT'S UNFAIR. NOT EVERYTHING'S IN RECESSION.
TRUE. WAGES, INFLATION, INTEREST RATES. THEY'RE ALL BOOMING.

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam
Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh

So.
Farewell then
Bhagwan Shree
Rajneesh,

Indian mystic
And terrific
Crook.

With your long
White beard,
Silly hat
And ninety
Rolls-Royces

You were God
To millions.

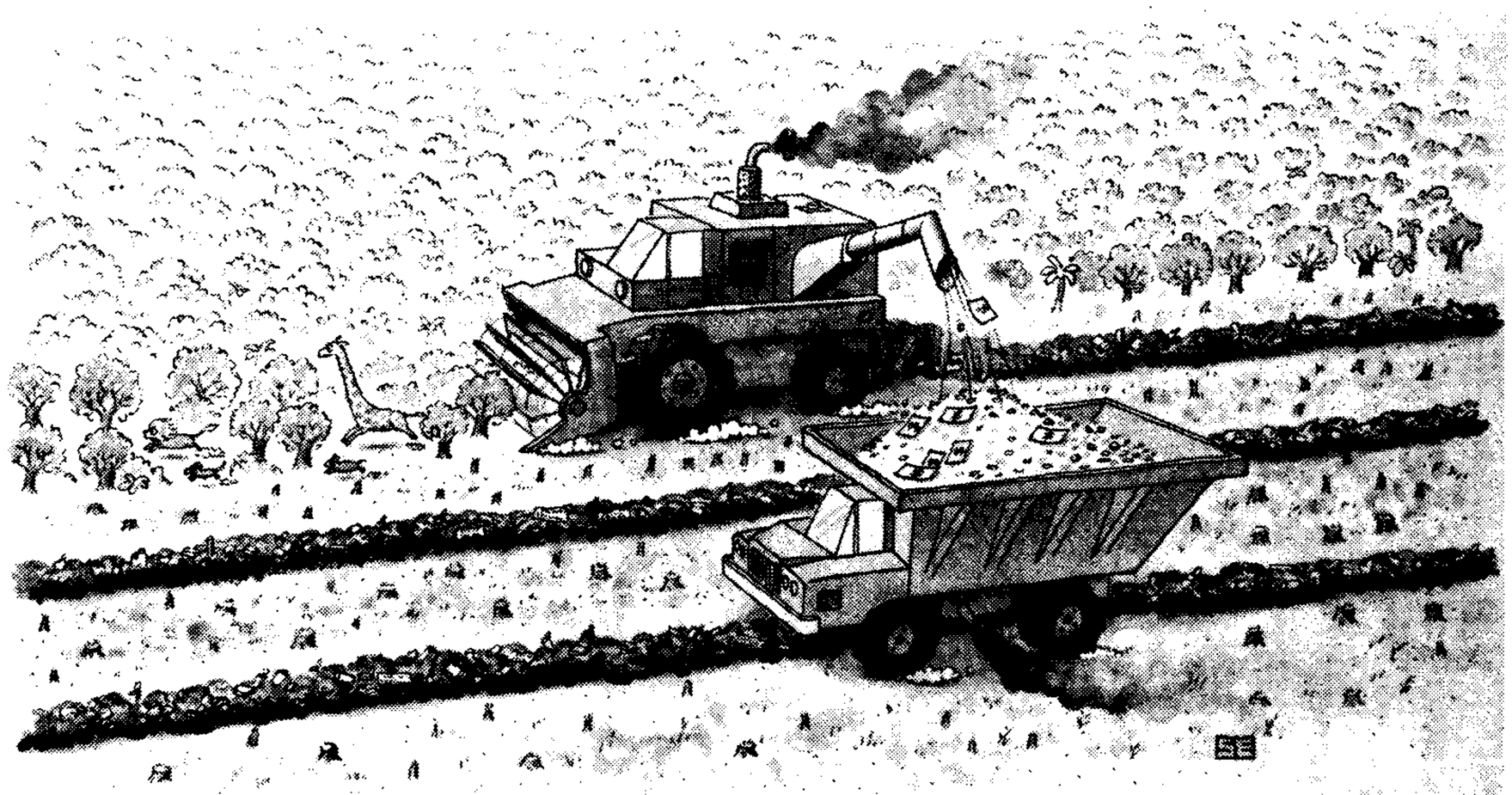
"Find your
Centre."

That was one
Of your
Catchphrases.

"Give me all
Your money."

That was
Another.

Shree J. Thribb (17½)



TV Pick of the Day

BBC1: 9.00pm.

Great Train Journeys of the World

Tonight Transport Minister Cecil Parkinson responds to the challenge of one of the most horrendous journeys in the world — London's notorious Northern Line.

"Of course I'd heard plenty of stories about what it was like to travel on the so-called 'underground railway'," says Parkinson, "but I had no idea what it would really be like."

In the film we see Parkinson preparing for his epic journey by eating a huge breakfast *(for full menu of the "Underground Sizzler", see Gnomefax page 94)*, before being driven to the infamous Leicester Square tube station by his chauffeur. The film follows his progress as he is introduced to the arcane complexities of the "ticket machine", but he is soon saved by a helpful official who waves him through with the words: "It's all right, Minister, you don't need a ticket."

Much-loved cartoon character (right) goes down the Tube

And — surprise! — the escalator, which has been out of order for months, is suddenly working again. There follows a haunting sequence as we see Parkinson gliding alone down into the bowels of the earth, where an empty carriage is waiting to whisk him to his destination.

We then see the Transport Minister sitting in his carriage with a huge champagne hamper, provided by LT's PR department, and leafing through a copy of *Penthouse*, before getting out at the next station, Charing Cross.

As he alights from the carriage, with scarcely a hair out of place, he is met by a reception committee of the entire LT board, who rush forward to ask him solicitously whether he has any complaints.

"None at all," he assures them, with a concerned, caring smile. "I think it is a wonderful way to travel. All the scare stories are clearly just fabrications got up by the media. As far as I am concerned, it was the journey of a lifetime. I certainly shan't be going again! It's much quicker by car!"

NEXT WEEK: Miles Kington takes the "Gravy Train" to Indie-land.

Celeb

LIGGER

I DON'T LIKE IT HERE, ANGEL. EVERYONE'S IGNORING ME.
MARILYN MONROE, ELVIS, PLATO, MOZART... EVEN BILLY THE BLOODY KID SNUBBED ME.
THEY DON'T KNOW YOU DO THEY, GARY?
EXACTLY. EVERYBODY'S MORE FAMOUS THAN ME. THIS IS PURGATORY.
OF COURSE IT IS. WHERE DID YOU THINK YOU WERE?
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
INCREASED BRAIN ACTIVITY, ROOM SEVEN, DOCTOR.

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: Charles has been invited to the "Author of the Year" lunch at the prestigious Haslemere Literary Society.

Now read on...

THERE was a buzz of excitement as the President of the Haslemere Literary Society, Mrs Sinclair Stevenson, banged her gavel and begged silence for their distinguished Chairman of Judges, Mr Nedwell "Ned" Twinky, a man who, as she put it, "would need no introduction from her".

There was a polite ripple of laughter as the plump middleaged man rose from his chair and dabbed his forehead with a pink silk handkerchief.

"Your Royal Highness — and authors all, ha ha ha! On my way here on the train I couldn't help noticing how many people were carrying books... some of them were even reading them. Ha ha ha ha!"

Prince Charles was at the top table, accompanied by his agent, Sir Gordon Giles, his publisher, Sir Christopher Hamish, his technical adviser, Dr Christopher Barkworth, and the delightful publicity lady, Miss Michelle Bloomsbury, who as usual was sitting unnecessarily close to Sir Christopher. They all smiled benignly as Mr Twinky rambled through a speech in praise of literacy.

"Finally, we come to the prize-winning tome itself. I feel like a schoolmaster, but I suppose with clause 28 in force one is not allowed to say that any more, ha ha ha..."

Sir Gordon guffawed loudly at the innuendo, spilling his glass of brandy over Charles's check trousers.

"Isn't he a hoot, sire?" he whispered. But Charles had no idea why they were laughing.

What was clause 28? Something to do with the trade unions perhaps? No doubt appalling... A blast of sour smoke from Sir Hamish's outsize Marietta y Higgs cigar engulfed him temporarily.

At the lectern Mr Twinky picked up a gold-plated quill pen in an onyx-style inkpot bearing the legend THE HASLEMERE POWERGEN BOOK WRITING PRIZE FOR AUTHOR OF THE YEAR 1990. His dulcet tones reached a climax.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is my very great honour to announce that this year's prizewinner is..."

Charles drew in his breath. Could he dare to hope for one minute that it would be him? In the dramatic pause left by the famous chat show host belle-lettrist and father of television satire, Charles's thoughts strayed back to the long hours of anguish as he had wrestled with his prose under the demanding eye of his friend and mentor, Sir Laurens van der Post. What was it the old sage had said? "Between the planting and the flowering come the long nights of winter." How true that was. How very true...

"Well done, sire!"

"Bravo!"

All eyes were suddenly on him, even those of the gorgeous Miss Bloomsbury, and he was being slapped on the back by all and sundry.

"Speech! Speech!" cried the smiling PR people, as they wheeled in piles of *It Really Is Appalling*, each with a neat gold band printed on the cover proclaiming it to be WINNER OF THE HASLEMERE BOOK AWARD 1990.

As if in a dream, Charles rose to his feet.

"It was my friend and mentor, Sir Laurens van der Post, who once said 'Between the planting and the...' "

CHARLES switched out the light and laid his head on the pillow. What a wonderful wonderful day it had been to be sure. As sleep gradually enfolded him in its warm embrace, he relived the sweet moment of his triumph. The photographs, the autographs, the adulation... He really *was* someone to be reckoned with at last... It really had been a perfect day...

The phone rang shrilly in the darkened room. Charles looked blearily at his Quinlan Terry National Trust 18th Century Palladian chronometer. It was 4.30am. Who on earth could it be? Surely not the former goon, Spike Loonigan, so well known for his practical jokes?

But the distant voice echoing from the other side of the world left Charles in no doubt.

"Chazzo! Guess who?"

It was Edward.

"What time have you got UK-side? I got coming up to 11 and it's a beaut!"

Charles groggily remembered that his younger brother was in New Zealand for the opening of the Commonwealth Games. It was incredible that news of Charles's award should have travelled so far so quickly — and how good it was of Edward to phone and congratulate him. Charles turned on the light and propped himself up against a pillow.

"Edward. How good of you to call. It really is exciting, isn't it?"

"You can say that again, Chazzer. There were 400 Maori birds dancing about naked and I had to rub noses with the lot. Then I was on 'Good Morning, Dunedin', I had three minutes live and I thought of this brilliant sound-bite. Get this — you can use it if you like. 'You may be down under, but you'll always be on top for me'. Megga, eh? It could be a song or even a whole musical! I'm gonna to tell Andy! Elaine or Sarah would be great and..."

Charles tried to imagine what on earth his brother's ramblings had to do with his prize.

"I'm sure it's jolly interesting, your news, Edward", he cut in. "But, I've been as you know having a rather exciting day myself. This prize I've won... Hello...?Hello...?" An Australian female voice interrupted. "G'day. The other caller has disconnected. If you wish to reconnect, please try later. G'day. The other caller has disconnected."

The message repeated itself several times before Charles disconsolately replaced the handset and turned out the light.

(To be continued)

He's lively, he's provocative, he's 122, he's

LORD DENNING

Every day Lord Denning sounds off about whatever it is he's read about in the Daily Telegraph.

HULLO there. Pray be hupstanding for myself. Well I never. That Judge Pickles, he really takes the biscuit.

Fancy him calling my old friend Lord Lane a silly old dinosaur.

Mind you, it's perfectly true. But you can't have a judge saying that sort of thing in public. It's neither right nor proper.

JUDGE Pickles. The way he courts publicity is becoming quite a scandal.

You can hardly open a paper these days without seeing him sounding off about one thing or another.

It would never have happened in my day that a judge would write in the newspapers.

Especially not attacking a fellow judge.

AT LEAST you can say one thing for Judge Pickles. He's not gay, like most of these judges nowadays.

At least, so I'm led to believe by what I read in the newspapers.

But then you can't believe everything you read in the newspapers.

Especially when it's said by a judge!

Fare thee well!

TOMORROW: Why I am glad Judge Pickles was not on my footpath case.

Great Bores Of Today.

"... I don't know what we're going to do on a Wednesday now that it's over there were only four but they were so beautifully crafted and the pacing was brilliant it really did work over the two hours and I'll tell you the character of Sergeant Lewis has developed so much mind you John Thaw is really so good he's really three-dimensional he's a Mozart lover so am I actually but it means the music is marvellous he's a thinking policeman you see and so human the Newcastle brown is it? and that wonderful Jag and setting it in Oxford was a brainwave those college backdrops really add so much it's quality television last week I thought it was the tramp who did the murders but my wife thought it was the masons you never know the one before I thought it was the car salesman and the first one with the incest had me completely fooled I've put my claim in for storm damage it's only a fence but..."

3

FM 90.2-92.4 MHz
MW 1215 kHz
News 7.30am, 8.30, 1.00pm, 7.00, 12 midnight

7.00 News and Weather

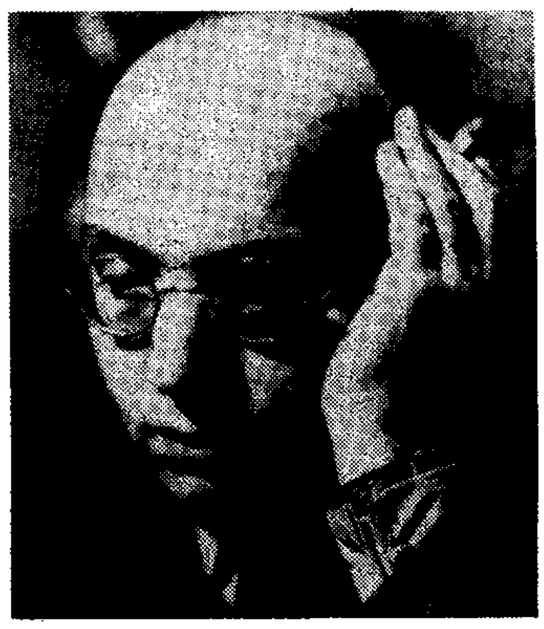
7.05 Morning Concert
Zhivkov — Six Bulgarian Dances (Cymbalum: HANS MODOROW) SOFIA RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA conducted by Jan Hoch
Ceausescu — Romanian Lament Op.3014. Played by I SECURITATE DI BUCHAREST, conductor Antonio Timisoara
Honecker — Symphonic Poem: Hand im der Till Eulenspiegel LEIPZIG GEWANDHAUS ORCHESTRA, conductor Egon Krenz

8.00 News and Weather

8.05 Morning Sequence
Dubcek — Overture — "The Prague Spring" BRATISLAVA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA, conductor Sir Michael Czeckland
Brauzuskas — 400th Piano Concerto in C Sharp Minor (soloist: VACLAV HAVEL) VILNIUS STATE ORCHESTRA, conductor Sir Norman Stone
Azerbaijan — "On The Shores of the Caspian" Suite RED ARMY COMBINED ASSAULT CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA, conductor Nagorno von Karabakh

9.00 News and Weather

9.05 Composer of the Week
Paul McCartney
Song cycle: O for the Wings (soprano: LINDA McCARTNEY)



Modorow 7.05

Transport Minister Robert Atkins opened the sale and was pissed when he said he hoped bidders would pay a lot for the plates because the money was going to the taxpayers.

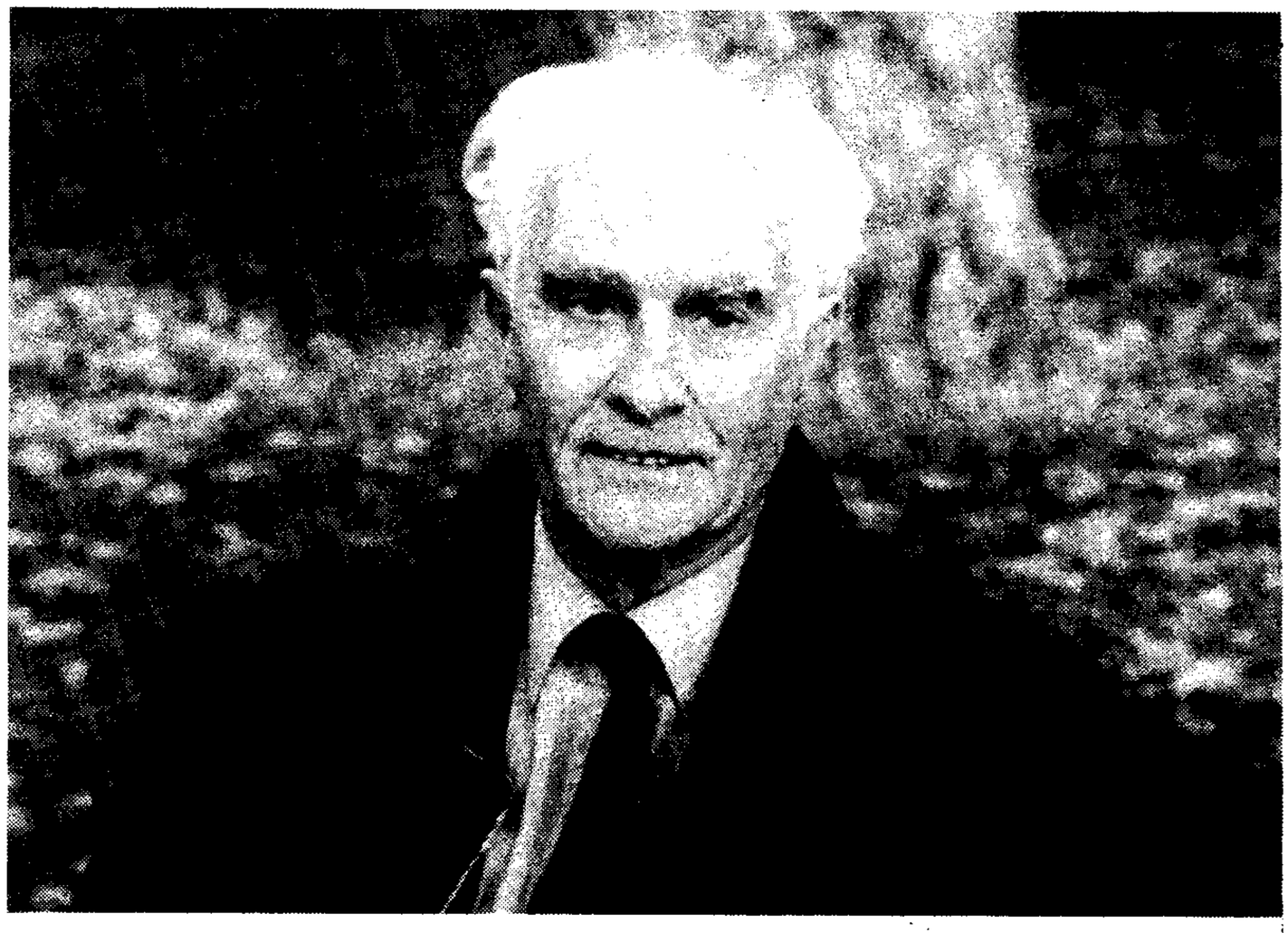
China Post

On Saturday, Muslim fundamentalists burned tyres and hurled stones in Bethlehem, prompting border police to close shops and clear the streets of everyone except tourists.

Jordan Times

THE SUNDAY TIMISOARA

TOP DISSIDENT TO FACE SHOW TRIAL



by Our Man in Wales
HAVANT A. CLWYD

In a new crackdown against opponents of her regime, Margarita Thatchescu has ordered the arrest and trial of her most outspoken critic, Sir Anthony Meyer, 86.

Last night dissident sources reported that the courageous reformer, who speaks for millions of ordinary Britons, had been formally "expelled" from his local Party in Wales, as a prelude to his probable execution.

Said one observer: "The trial was a farce. Sir Anthony was not allowed to speak for more than two hours, during which he was continually barracked and cat-called by elderly women in blue hats, shouting 'traitor', 'Judas', and 'running-dog of Kinnockite-Prescottism'."

Meyer Culpa

The frail figure of the dissident leader seemed at times close to tears as the Thatcherites hurled abuse, accusing him of having plotted to bring down the Great Leader and Educator of Her People, Margarita.

Finally Sir Anthony broke down and confessed, amid sobs, that he had been guilty of "incorrect thinking" and "harbouring doubts about the total rightness of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe".

He begged to be punished, and suggested that he should be strung up, as it was the only language that people like him understood.

Sir Anthony is 106.

Your American Football Queries with **Old Gridiron**

Dear Old Grid:

I have been following this year's out of state preliminaries for the North West Senior League Divisional Playoffs with Channel 4's pigskin superpresenter, Wayne Peabody. Brilliant though Wayne undoubtedly is (especially at that crucial point in the Toledo Toucans' nailbiting finish against the Yucata Yellowskins when their second line offensive sidewinder, the 380-pound former Idaho Iceberg, Murray "The Condo" Sanchez, boomed a 98-yard paper flyer right out of the three-man junction set up by the Yellowskins' No 78, the first leg stopper, Rudolph "The Reindeer" Patel) he nevertheless failed to spot Rob "Iron Lung" McLennan blatantly stealing a two-stick white ball right under the nose of no less a dump trucker than Eddy "Psycho" Moonraker!!!

Yours,
Tracy Sanderer,
305 Carpark Crescent,
Basildon.

Old Gridiron writes:
Well now I done read it all! When I, Old Gridiron, a veteran of 50 Superbowls, 180 divisionals, and 3,000 bottles of Old Sam Buskin's Bushmill Bourbon, am compared to Wayne Peabody, that squealy son of a no good ferret who can't tell a four down longone from a six man howdydoo, it's time to pack my bags and bid y'all farewell. Yessiree.

Dear Old Grid:

I have been reading in the latest edition of *Grid And Gridmen* (EMAP, 70p monthly) that you were turned down for Wayne Peabody's job as Channel 4's Gridiron Guru and have ever since found every excuse to abuse him in your column. Is this true?

Yours,
Wayne Peabody,
c/o *Hi There Gridders!*,
Channel 4,
Charlotte Street,
London W1.

Old Grid writes:
You bastard!

■ *NEXT WEEK: Old Terry Marsh on small arms fire.*

Apple found in pie shock

by Our Food Safety Staff
John Selwyn Gumdrop

A Neasden housewife was last night in a "comfortable condition" after the shock of discovering that her Mr Kipling Apple Pie contained a small piece of apple.

Said Mrs Ethel Rushdie, 56, of Palin Road: "I was disgusted. Luckily, we saw it in time, otherwise someone might have eaten it."

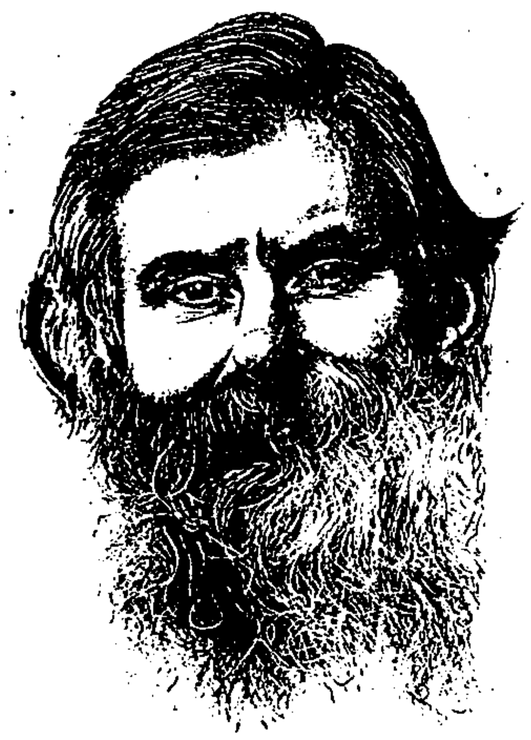
But a spokesman for the cakes-to-pastries multi-million-pound conglomerate said last night: "We are mystified. Our cakes are well known for being made of nothing but pre additives, colouring and fragments of glass.

"We can only assume that the sliver of apple which so upset Mrs Rushdie was inserted by a person or persons unknown as a deliberate act of industrial vandalism."

The firm's lawyers later issued a statement saying: "Mr Kipling makes exceedingly good cakes, and anyone who says anything to the contrary will be hearing from us."

"If you don't eat up your greens you won't get any pudding"

SHREE ANDREAS WHITTAM-BHAGWASH



This saintly figure first rose to prominence in the late 1980s when he set up his famous "school of boredom" in the City Road. Attracted by his other-worldly aura and his doctrine of supreme dullness, thousands of followers flocked to join his movement. His mystic utterance "It is. Are you?" seemed to sum up a wholly spiritual approach to life that made an especial appeal to young, affluent, middle-class whites looking for a meaning to their existence. His disciples, known as "The Grey People", were distinguished by their colourless suits and short hair. They included many famous journalists, amongst them Adam Mars Jones, Stephen Glover, Peter Jenkins and Miles Kington.

"To see Shree Andreas seated at his daily 'editorial conference' discoursing on a topic such as 'The Money Supply', 'The European Regulatory Mechanism' or 'Lawson's Economic Miracle' was to feel oneself in the presence of a charismatic, almost divine figure," wrote worshipper Alexander Chancellor.

Yet in the early 90s the dream began to go wrong for the "San Andreassyn", as the devotees were known. Shree Andreas himself grew richer and more remote. He took to making frequent foreign trips leaving the running of the ashram to his less capable subordinates who began increasingly to quarrel amongst themselves.

He began new ventures, including a newspaper for children to indoctrinate them early into his philosophy. And then finally he overreached himself, spending millions of pounds on a gigantic monument to his movement — the *Independent on Sunday.*

It was a sad end to one of the greatest religious figures of the late twentieth century.

by Stephen Glover (formerly an aide and bodyguard to the Bhagwash)

Shree Andreas Fotherington Whittam Strobismus, 1987-1990

Reprinted from the Sun

10 ways to spot a gay judge

1. Wears a wig.
2. Scottish accent.
3. Shiny buckles on shoes.
4. Wears long, funny "robes".
5. Addresses male barristers as "my learned friend".
6. Discusses "briefs" openly.
7. Gives funny looks to jury.
8. Makes bitchy remarks about the press.
9. Er...
10. Hullo sailor.

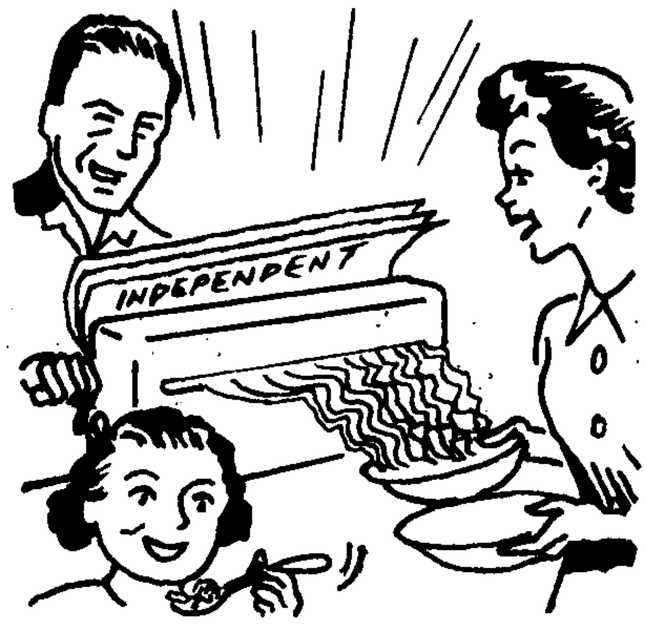
NEW FROM GNOME

The amazing SINDIE-SHRED!

Say goodbye to hours of weekend boredom misery reading the new Independent on Sunday!!!

Introducing the Gnome-patented **SINDIE-SHRED!!**

The easy to operate Sindie-Shred converts the 279-page paper into nourishing muesli-style breakfast food for all the family! In minutes!!



One newspaper provides enough Sindie-Shreddies™ for two helpings a day for an average family for a whole week.

Simply sprinkle on sugar and top with a dressing of cream! Mmmm... It's Indielicious!!!

Produced in co-operation with UniGlover plc, City Road, London.

WATCH OUT!

IT'S THE ELEPHANT MAN 18

People hated him, reviled him, swore at him in the street. No one could bear to be in same room as him. But he was saved by the love of one man, Mrs Thatcher. Unlike the elephants who weren't saved at all. They were slaughtered in their thousands.

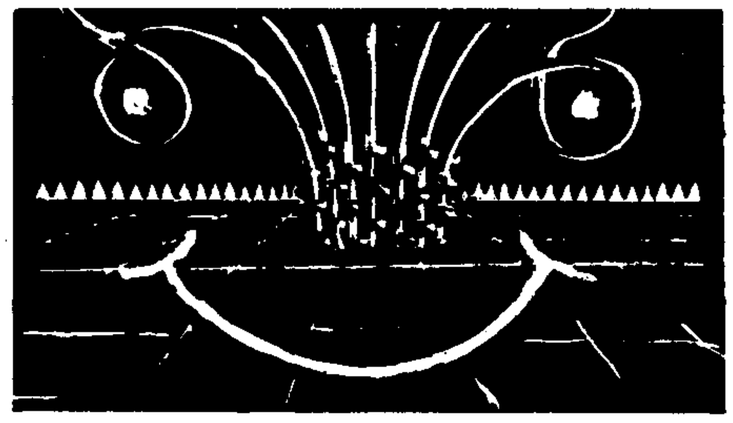
JOHN HURD stars as
DOUGLAS HURD in **THE ELEPHANT MAN**
A new Merchant/Ivory Production
Filmed on location in Hong Kong

Now showing at the following Gnomeons

Woody Green
Julian Temple Meads
Tufnell Parker
Tooting Peckinpah
Kubrick Lane
Leone-On-Sea
Brent Ford
Puttnam High Street
Hitchcockfosters
Screen-On-The-Greenaway

(That's enough cinemas, Ed.)

DIARY



PAUL JOHNSON

Once again, Spring, that damnable season, is coming around. This means more hard slog in the garden. Like most sensible people, I hate the sight of flowers, with all their hideous yellows and pinks and oranges. Yet in Spring new flowers appear every day. Any gardener worth his salt will get up specially early, axe in one hand, a sharp pair of secateurs in t'other, and chop off any militant bud as soon as it puts its head above ground.

Needless to say, the left-dominated BBC is in this, as in most other matters, out of tune with the British public. A new season of so-called "gardening" programmes is upon us. These programmes make all the right liberal noises about beautiful blooms, lovely petals and such nonsense, and they are presented by the inevitable array of females, homosexuals and men in boots. But I have yet to see a single "gardening" programme giving the other point of view. Why, for instance, has there been nothing explaining to the average viewer how to take a chainsaw to a rose-bush? The truth of the matter is that the BBC lives in fear of offending the liberal hierarchy which holds its purse-strings, flower-sniffers to a man.

When work is done, man must needs have his rest. I have always been a great believer in fun, and for this reason I ban gramophones, transistor radios, televisions, "videos", toasters or any other type of mechanical contrivance from my home. Our amusements are traditional. They are centred upon the paper-hat, the blindfold, the penny whistle, and the good old-fashioned sing-song. The fun begins with myself as Head of the House being blindfolded by my wife and assorted offspring. They then place a paper-hat upon my head and a penny whistle in my mouth, and for their entertainment I accompany myself on a full solo rendition of the Complete Works of Gilbert and Sullivan. This takes between fourteen and fifteen hours, certainly not longer. They tell me that they sit enraptured throughout. Oddly enough, when I completed the final rousing chorus of *The Pirates of Penzance* at the end of our last Fun Evening, I removed my blindfold to find not a soul there. After doughty detective-work, I located them at a local speakeasy, sipping lurid cocktails and watching *Beadle's About* in the company of black men. Roy Jenkins and the creeping liberalisation of the Sixties still have much to answer for. Before tonight's fun kicks off, I will be locking all doors, barring all windows, and applying good, strong chains to all seats.

What a lot of tosh is whined about Freedom of Speech by the rent-a-protest lobby of Socialist millionaires and their backers! Most ordinary, decent citizens care not a fig for dubious literature espousing subversive, anti-British values, often in a sexually explicit manner. Fashionable Hampstead authors might feel that they have some form of god-given right to parade their left-wing consciences upon the bookshelves of our great cities, but this argument, like its filthy-necked proponents, simply will not wash. Most intelligent people are content to read nothing but my own works, and they have no wish to be dictated to be the likes of Salman Rushdie and the Trendy Left. Yet the vast majority of my own works are now remaindered or unread. Is it not time for the Government to take a firm stand?

Any writer worth his salt should be able to turn his hand to the light-hearted occasional essay. I have a sturdy, thoroughly British sense of humour. I laughed on no less than eight different occasions last year, five of them at remarks I myself had made, and I always welcome the opportunity to amuse and enlighten others. My weekend pieces for *The Daily Telegraph* — "In Praise of the Bicycle Clip", "The Pleasures of Stinging-Nettles", "Stamping on Small, Furry Animals" — were notable for their winning combination of sound advice and jocular asides, and I continue to receive up to five hundred letters a week — many of them written by myself — from grateful readers.

I fear that no such sense of humour resides on the Left. I cannot see Mr Harold Pinter or his ilk chuckling at, say, the robust good humour of Mr Mike Gatting, even though his courage in defying the killjoys of the totalitarian Left is an inspiration to many. This explains the poverty of so much so-called comedy on the BBC. Unashamedly left-wing productions like *Dad's Army* and *Terry and June*, with their incessant sniping at institutions forged by traditional values, such as the Armed Forces and the family, have done much to destroy our image abroad. The cynical destruction of all we hold dear is no substitute for a sense of humour.

Leftish scare-stories are rife. The current systematic whispering campaign against "Bovine Spongiform" is only the latest in a long line. I have long found that Bovine Spongiform is a tremendous asset to any writer worth his salt. If it were not, I would be the first to know, as editors employ me for my clear-thinking and sound commonsense. Only this morning, the phone rang, and, as I danced this way and that in circular motions en route to answer it, I felt my head butt against the wall and my leg kick robustly through a door, and I thought to myself, "Cock-a-doodle-doo". Picking up the receiver, I found that, with the application of a decent bit of sticky tape, it could be made to resemble a perfectly good moustache, which I am wearing as I write. Incidentally, I have long argued that typing with one's "plonker" saves one's fists for banging the table and hurling things, and all my articles are written in this way. So let us hear no more from those politically-motivated fanatics who would wish to manipulate our minds against this fine, thoroughly British, disease.

الفالين دون عبر البحار للتجارة
١١١-٠١٠٨ نبتون هاوس
ص.ب ٤٤٢
مارينا باي - جبرالتر
تليفون: ٧٦٩٣٦ (٣٥٠) - تلكس: ٢١٠٣ فالمت جي كي
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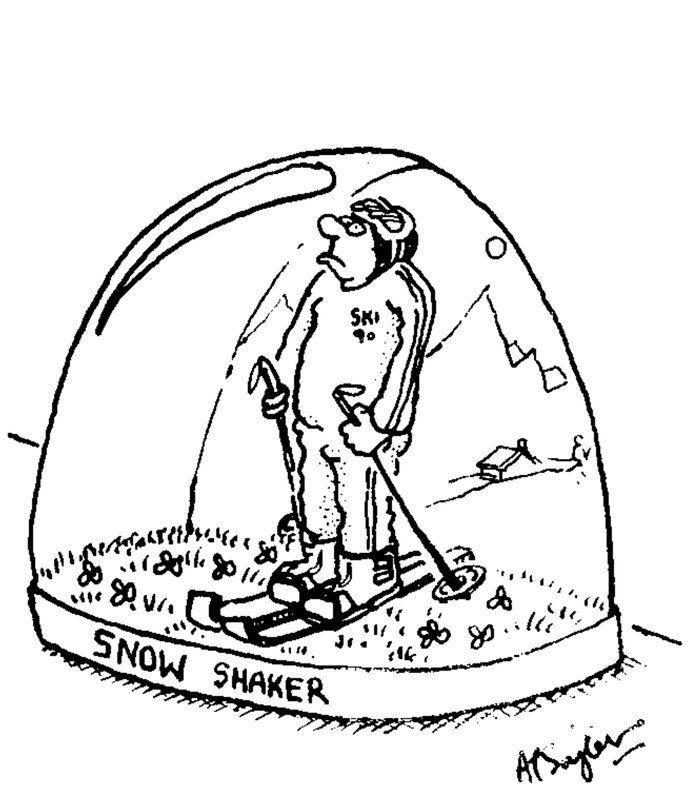
Emperor Hirohito of Japan.

The Indy



Literary Review

Reed warblings

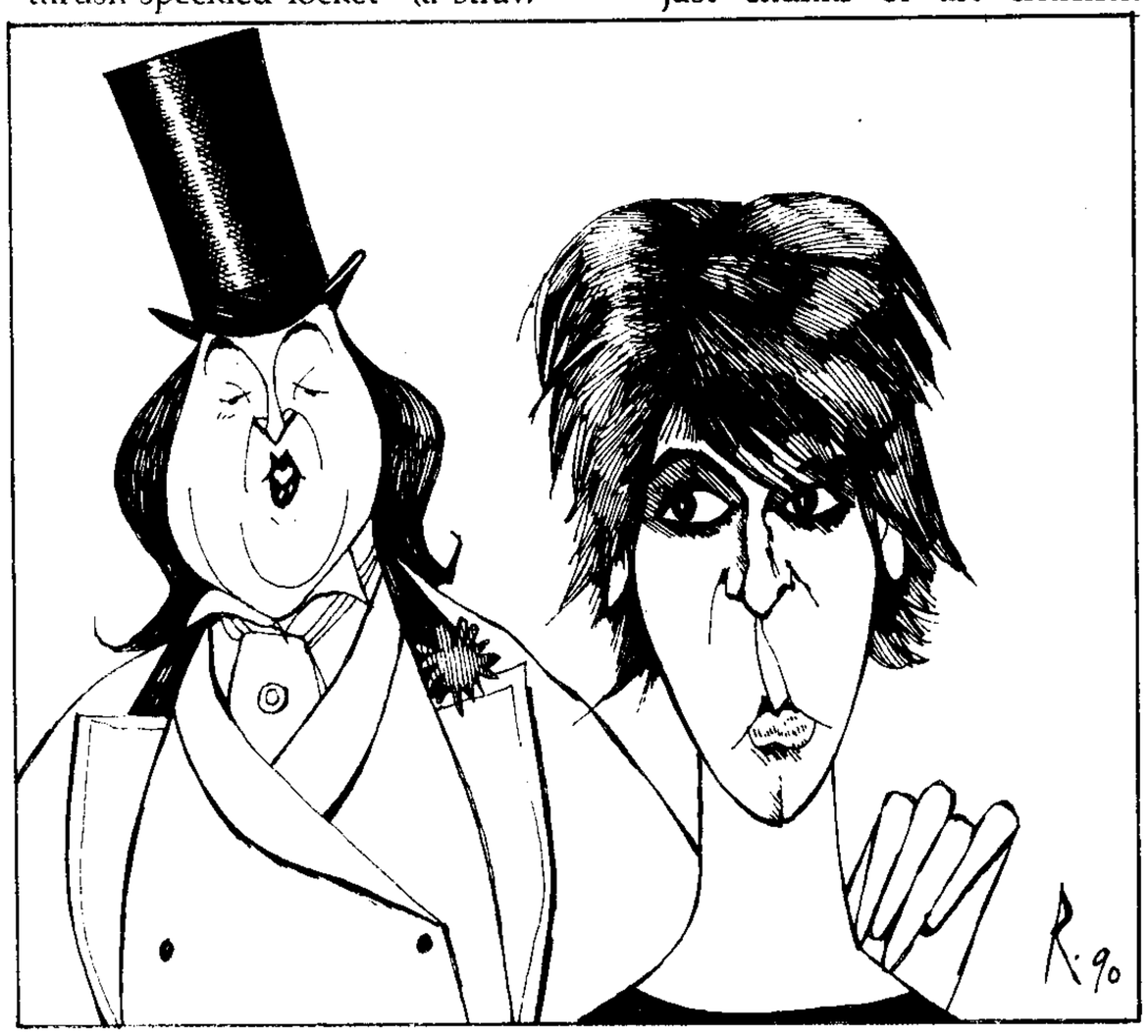
Nineties
Jeremy Reed
(Jonathan Cape £7.95)

MY *DEARS*! Barely a whisker into 1990 and already *la décadence* is upon us. Berkoff's *Salome* is playing to packed houses at the Phoenix theatre; Donald Sinden is creaking across the boards at the Playhouse impersonating Oscar; various quaintly dressed young people have appeared *ensemblé* in the *Sunday Times* supposedly to epitomise the spirit of the new decade; and now, bang on time, comes pretty Mr Jeremy Reed with a thick volume of poems aptly titled *Nineties*.

There has been quite a lot about Jeremy Reed in the Sunday supplements recently: Jeremy Reed displaying his splendid cheekbones, making his fascinating *moués* and generally camping it up to tremendous effect. Cape has published his novels *The Lipstick Boys* (oh yes), *Blue Rock* and *Red Eclipse*. Last autumn he brought out a critical study with the engaging title *Madness: The price of poetry* (Mr Reed pictured on the jacket fervently pressing his lips against what appeared to be a piece of stonework). Amid all the silly newspaper articles and the talk about *fin de siècle*, the imputation is that if we are to have a 1990s which in any way resemble the 1890s, then it will be Mr Jeremy Reed, singing his sad little songs and twanging, coyly, his little lyre, who will emerge to become their principal poetical ornament.

The original decadent poets — Dowson, Le Gallienne, Symonds *et al* — were, in case you didn't know, one of our less distinguished literary groupings. Their characteristics have been enumerated by Professor J.H. Buckley in his book *The Victorian Temper*: "Sedulously... they strove to proclaim by their very dress and speech and gesture, a full aesthetic autonomy... As writers... they struggled to make a highly personalised style the ultimate expression of their highly stylised personalities." Well, Jeremy Reed certainly looks extremely decadent, and I think we can take it from the jacket photograph — anguished stare into mirror from beneath untidy fringe — that he has a highly stylised personality.

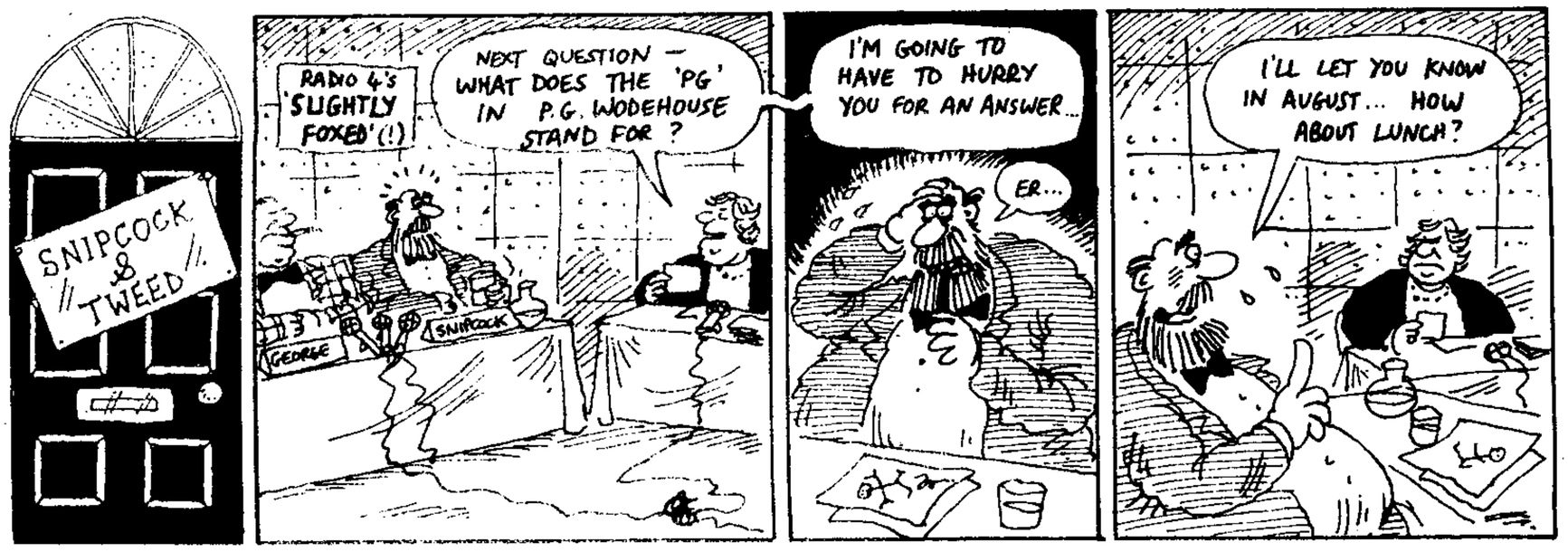
Decadent poetry itself was distinguished by several singular *motifs*: by a choice, exotic vocabulary, by a sensibility which looked not to nature but to art for its images, and by an obsession with sex built largely on sexual ambiguity. Jeremy Reed scores pretty highly on all these counts, what with the lines about "calyx, the pistilled thread" and the "thrush-speckled locket" (a strawberry, naturally), the children compared to Picasso drawings and the stanzas about bisexuality ("opposites reconciled by overreach"). In fact, each succeeding poem is not much more than a scoop into a brantub of Ninetyish gestures and preoccupations — poems about tarts, drugs, fetish and suicide, taking in venerable camp icons such as Baudelaire and Mallarmé, newer totems like Lou Reed and Bowie ("pantomorphic chameleon") and the usual dandy appurtenances of roses, lilies, cravats (a whole poem about neckties) and darkling hushes.



Somewhere among this recitation of sighs, pouts and arty nudges, Mr Reed suggests that "one looks for a new poetry, something animated, a renaissance of imagery, a futuristic dynamic". This is rather odd, as what he himself turns out is some very old poetry — and some very old attitudes — indeed. Ask what Mr Reed stands for (as one can ask all but the most *dégagé* poet) and the answer is: not very much at all, save for a rather generalised notion of "art" and (by implication) the sound scheme that youngish men with dyed hair should be given sums of money sufficient to keep them producing these darling volumes for the public edification.

Mr Reed has passion, but without apparent conviction, is excited by words but has no obvious interest in what lies behind them. For the majority of his poems are not actually about anything. They are simply *descriptions* of scene, situation, incident and — in the case of the pieces about well-known painting — just chunks of art criticism chopped up into irregular lines of blank verse.

To do Mr Reed justice, there are one or two quite decent poems included here ("Mistletoe", "After it was over") in which Lorca, Mallarmé and Co are temporarily dumped in favour of straightforward observation of the countryside. The rest is a quietly hysterical emotional splurge. According to the blurb, Mr Reed is "reaching out to a new decade", in which case the implication is that 2Oth century poetry will end — a phrase I owe to that distinguished critic Miss Julie Burchill — not with a bang but a simper.


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
RADIO 4's 'SLIGHTLY FOXED'(!)
NEXT QUESTION — WHAT DOES THE 'PG' IN P.G. WODEHOUSE STAND FOR ?
GEORGE
SNIPCOCK
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO HURRY YOU FOR AN ANSWER...
ER...
I'LL LET YOU KNOW IN AUGUST... HOW ABOUT LUNCH?
£40

Books & Bookmen

■ **WHAT WAS wrong with the book trade, snorted *Publishing News* editor Fred Newman to his squat proprietor Clive Labovich, was that there were masses of prizes but no equivalent of the Hollywood Oscars ceremony. What was needed, to stimulate a sincere interest in the product, was an annual televised affair, comparable to the BAFTA and *Evening Standard* theatre awards, in which authors would thank their mothers for having had them and their editors for being so wonderful.**

***Publishing News* booked the ballroom of the Hyde Park hotel and persuaded publishers to buy tables for 10 guests at £600 a table. Collins booked two tables, cancelled, then tried to rebook by which time all 500 places were taken. The evening was the tackiest occasion imaginable — an absolute all-time low in the history of book trade social events, with vile food and surly waiters who wouldn't bring Freddie Forsyth a brandy until he paid for it in cash and in advance.**

Roald Dahl, publishing's most stroppy author, for once made a speech without mentioning his willy or how ghastly most prize-winning books are; but surely not because he won a prize himself. Prizes of "nibbies", grotesque replicas of steel pen nibs, were presented to book jacket designers, large booksellers and small booksellers, and sundry authors.

There was a shortlist of three or four for each category — with the exception of The Author of the Year. "You'll all have guessed who he is," trilled Frank Delaney. The author, sensible fellow, had a previous engagement and wasn't able to pick up his "nibbie" in person but his face, greatly magnified appeared on video, declaring how astonished he was when told he was author of the year for *It Really Is Appalling*. Ribald cries of "I bet you were" rang out.

All the awards but one were selected by booksellers. "Publisher of the Year" was chosen by literary agents and other hangers-on. The chairman of Hodder & Stoughton had the wit to be embarrassed by his firm making the shortlist. Faber and Faber won, its sanctimonious editorial director Robert McCrum saying that with all due respect to His Royal Highness the author of the year was of course Solomon Rushdie. The Dahls and Archers (Jeffrey gave a nibbie to a best bookseller) and Forsyths glowered; the Delaneys and Trelfords (Dirty Don was the guest of defunct W H Allen) nodded smugly.

Liz Thomson, a *Publishing News* reporter, tarted up in western gear played the guitar half way through. The most embarrassing moment though of an unspeakably embarrassing evening was when the compere, the Earl of Lichfield, confided to the throng that he had once photographed Jilly Cooper topless. Pass the sick bag.

☐ *THERE was little sympathy for Richard Branson in publishing this week when his absurd UK2000/Thatcher litter project collapsed.*

Last week he had a tantrum and sacked most of W.H. Allen's staff.

The staff, having turned the company around, bought Harrap and improved Star for their bearded proprietor, no doubt felt that he deserved the push more than they did.

'Bookworm'

Nuclear waste

Mine host

WHILE Nirex, the nuclear waste disposal executive, seems to have run into intractable problems over its intention to dispose of waste underground at Sellafield and Dounreay, its agents in this matter, Cementation, proceed at full speed with something not entirely dissimilar to a dump at a geologically perfect site on Anglesey, barely four miles from the coast at Wylfa nuclear power station.

Nirex, of course, is not obliged to declare its long-term intentions. When it did so over the shallow clay bed disposal sites in Bedfordshire, it was a public relations disaster.

At the Hinkley inquiry, however, the CEGB announced that a deep repository would become available around 2005. To the aficionados of planning inquiries and local protest movements, such a confident statement as the year 2005 seems definitely over-optimistic. Sellafield and Dounreay, of course, are the only two places in the UK and Europe where the nuclear industry employs more than half the local workforce and has a stranglehold over local state finance and development agencies. This was the most likely consideration, rather than geological suitability, that identified these two sites as possibles.

Meanwhile a small, newly-formed mining company, Anglesey Mining Co, has shown the ninth highest percentage rise in value on the Stock Exchange in a year.

Anglesey Mining announced an interest in mining the Parys Mountain site on Anglesey in June 1988. Yet, despite being to all intents and purposes just another mining venture, the firm managed to raise its full share funding of £5 million in one day.

The company claimed to have drilled deposits of copper, zinc, lead, gold and silver in an ore belt surrounding a plug of volcanic rock. *No one seems to have questioned the fact that most of these minerals are in oversupply worldwide.* Equally, no investors asked why it was necessary to drill an expensive deep shaft when the ore body is more easily accessible via surface drifts.

People on the London stock market seemed to know something the locals had missed; but this was soon remedied when local stockbrokers were recruited to sell shares in the mine to local residents, thereby creating a most useful local — and interested — pressure group.

When plans of the proposed mine workings were published in a local newspaper, few people noticed that they had a certain similarity to published details of a Nirex disposal site. Even when the main drilling contractors turned out to be Cementation — at present also tendering for the proposed Nirex sites at Sellafield and Dounreay — few made any connection.

Anglesey Mining says the shaft should be completed this year and that over the next 15 years it hopes to extract five million tons of ore from the workings. That takes it to the year 2005 — coincidentally the exact year Nirex claims that a nuclear waste facility becomes available.

This is a useful coincidence bearing in mind the proximity of the mine to Wylfa nuclear power station where the CEGB recently applied to build a deep water harbour. British Rail maintains a branch line to the site which would also be useful with the huge volumes of soon-to-be-redundant and decommissioned nuclear power stations, all of which are accessible by sea from coastal sites or by rail from nearby Trawsfynydd.

The site's geology has been identified as suitable for dumping by the International Atomic Energy Agency working party on underground repositories, and is about as near perfect a site as possible.

Meanwhile drilling has progressed down to 400ft. By 2005 the mine will just be another hole in the ground, in county planning terms. It would not even need a change-of-use permit to be presented to the people of the UK as a much-needed nuclear waste disposal site. By then the country will be willing to pay any amount for it, much to the joy of the original shareholders, including those lucky locals.

London Underground

Tubular balls-up

IT WAS a secret well kept. None of the posters announcing that Mansion House Tube station was to close for 15 months from the beginning of December made any mention of London Underground's involvement in the property development due to take place nextdoor. Instead, everything appeared under the name of MEPC, the giant property company.

The truth is that London Underground appears to have given up the unequal struggle of trying to run a dirty, dangerous and totally unreliable transport system in the capital and is switching its efforts into property development. It is now a partner in a venture to build a 42,000 sq ft office building at 60 Queen Victoria Street, a site next to Mansion House station.

No contract for the building work has yet been awarded — tenders are out — but a rough cost of £7 million is suggested by property analysts.

So why the secrecy? In a letter explaining why the station has to close for so long, managing director Denis Tunnicliffe gave two contradictory reasons. First he claimed it was "totally impractical to maintain access to the station through the site during the construction of the new development". A couple of paragraphs later he was less economical with the truth.

Big Brother MEPC, claiming that the City property market was growing weaker by the day, had highlighted the costs of keeping the station open during the work and saw it as threatening the scheme's viability. MEPC even said it would pull out if London Underground kept the station open.

No one will be surprised that London Underground caved in. But what did the chairman of its property committee, Sir Neil Shields, knighted for work as a lackey in Conservative constituency circles, extract from Sir Henry Benson, chairman of MEPC, in return for the further humiliation of London's commuters?

According to Tunnicliffe, "an increase of 25 per cent in the size of the ticket hall and a couple more ticket gates... the modernisation of the platforms and bringing the station up to new fire safety standards."

Surely London Underground should have been doing most of this work anyway, and doing it without closing the station?

Er, yes, came Tunnicliffe's reply.

And why was the whole project not postponed until the market improved when it would have been possible to go ahead as envisaged, but without closing the station?

"I do not believe there is anything useful to add," he said.

Dulwich Village

Very kinky

MEN FROM the transport department and their consultants, Travers Morgan, went to Dulwich Village last week to find out what locals thought of the plan to improve their environment by driving a four-lane highway through it (see *Eye* 732).

They found 1,500 jammed into the Great Hall of Dulwich College indicating their dissent with shouts, jeers, laughter and whistles.

There was of course much interest in the Thatcher kink — the stretch where the planned new road, which has been following the South Circular, suddenly moves to the north and carves up Bel Air and Dulwich parks but misses where the Thatchers plan to spend their retirement.

Not only will it avoid subjecting their home to "environmental disbenefit", but it will turn the busy two-lane road which now goes past it into a peaceful cycle track.

So why not dig down to make the tunnel from the road and thereby save the parks from being ravaged? Because, said the consultants and the men from the ministry, the disturbance to road users and those living alongside it (aha, came the shouts) would be greater.

Well why not widen the road at that point by chopping off people's front gardens, a bit of the Dulwich College grounds and the edge of the park just like they were doing on other stretches? That, it seemed, would be expensive and cause too much disturbance for road users.

To avoid all these agonising dilemmas, according to Paul Harman of the Dulwich Village Preservation Society, the new road could take a line slightly to the south and cut across the golf course where Denis Thatcher plays with Sir Robin Butler, the nation's top civil servant. It would mean, said Mr Harman, the golfers having to play only 12 holes for two or three years.

What is worrying enraged villagers is that a property blight has now settled on the area. No outsiders will buy houses along the prospective route and, alas for the prime minister, no one is immune. The value of her retirement home may already be dropping because of the uncertainty over whether the kink will go ahead.

Research and development

Poly-more-fuss

A BIG ROW is raging within Plymouth Polytechnic over the activities of some in the Department of Communication Engineering.

Two research students, Gavin Ray and Simon Shepard, work in a smaller research unit called the Network Research Group. Both Ray and Shepherd are registered for PhD degrees through the poly and have received sponsorship funding from ISTEL Ltd and IBM respectively.

They have been working on a computer programme called Virus Hunter — designed to identify and correct "viruses" in computer systems — and developed and perfected it over many hundreds of hours of poly time.

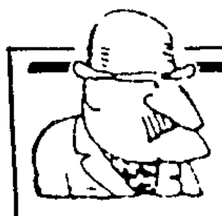
So successful has this programme been that these keen and able students quietly formed a company, Defiant Systems Ltd, to market it. The problem, however, is that they used poly phones for their private business and were essentially marketing a product in which the poly could rightly claim to have some commercial interest.

Another academic in the department, Dr Vic Grout, complained; but he made the fatal mistake of writing a letter to a local newspaper which was sweeping in condemning commercialism in polytechnics. For this he was brought before a disciplinary tribunal and charged with bringing the poly into disrepute.

It should be said that polytechnics are now corporate entities and can raise money by commercial activity; lecturers can sell their services. A poly spokesman told the *Eye* that the whole Virus Hunter affair was being investigated and it would therefore inappropriate to comment.

PC Edward Thomas: an apology

On 15th January 1990 *Private Eye* apologised sincerely in the High Court to PC Edward Thomas of City Road police station, London, for serious allegations about him published in the issue of *Private Eye* dated 2nd October 1987, and accepted that there were no grounds for any criticism of his conduct. In addition, *Private Eye* has agreed to pay him substantial compensation and his full legal costs.



In the City

MORE than a few eyebrows have been raised by the continued omission from the honours list of two pro-Thatcher businessmen known to be favourites of Number Ten -- the other half of Hanson Trust, Sir Gordon White, and caring property developer Godfrey Bradman. White was tipped in some circles for a "Lord" Hanson matching peerage, while Bradman was reckoned to be in the running for a knighthood.

Unfortunately, both are far less popular at the Somerset House headquarters of the Inland Revenue than they are in Downing Street. And the taxman always gets to have a say when it comes to honours.

White did not win friends at the Revenue by structuring his Hanson shareholding through offshore entities after he left Britain in 1973. Such arrangements were perfectly proper, if unpopular with the taxman. While living in New York and commuting regularly to London, White was resident in Bermuda.

Some years later, however, the Revenue's attention was drawn to the fact that White had the use of a London home, something which (for a British national) can make even the most non-resident of non-residents eligible for UK tax. This accidental oversight on the part of White and his advisers was happily and privately resolved to the Revenue's satisfaction.

But it would be wrong to infer that either this minor matter or White's long non-residence for UK tax purposes should, would or has counted against a well merited peerage which if Hanson Trust's great American successes did not justify then its contributions to Conservative Party funds would most certainly do so.

Bradman's possible problem is that the Revenue has a long and unforgiving memory. While today noted for his success in developing Rosehaugh and supporting worthy causes, Bradman made his first millions by enabling, for a substantial fee, a large number of property men and other fast lane entrepreneurs to escape the high tax traps set by both the Wilson and Heath governments.

Bradman created and retailed a number of totally artificial tax schemes which spirited multi-millions out of the Revenue's grasp. Many of these schemes successfully survived later legal challenges. By the Eighties Bradman no longer wanted to be reminded of his former life in tax avoidance.

Eventually in the early Seventies Bradman and the Revenue called a truce. Bradman agreed to stop marketing tax schemes and the Revenue agreed to remove him from the top of their legal hit list and, most important, not to obstruct his planned move into banking and property. The rest, as they say, is history, but whether the taxman is now prepared to forgive and forget is less certain.

JAMES GUERIN's admission that he knew back in 1987 that he was under investigation by the US authorities for suspected illegal arms and technology shipments to South Africa raises not just the question of what Ferranti knew of International Signal & Control's problems at the time of the take-over, but also what was known by Guerin's long-time merchant bank advisers Robert Fleming.

Just what Flemings did not know and why has already become an issue since it has emerged that Guerin and ISC were engaging in phoney contracts hidden by the device of circular offshore payments from as early as 1983.

From 1982 when ISC made its London stock market debut, Flemings were the closest City advisers to Guerin. Flemings were ultimately involved with the ISC prospectus and provided, through a connection with Hongkong partners Jardine, Mattheson, one of the non-executive directors. Flemings were also at hand when in 1983 ISC issued more shares as part of its acquisition of Marquardt. They were still on the team when Ferranti bid.

It was seemingly Flemings who insisted that Guerin remove the non-defence interests from ISC before the flotation. The bankers presumably had some knowledge therefore of Guerin's Parent Industries and his need for cash, which justified his regular ISC share sales. A factor which might have given them some clue as to why and how a man who is alleged to have syphoned off $198 million came to have his remaining Ferranti ISC share stake sold out from under him by Citibank to repay an outstanding and, presumably unrepayable, loan?

While Ferranti and ISC's auditors Peat Marwick, have more than their share of explaining to do regarding Guerin, Robert Fleming should not be omitted from the list of supposed watchdogs that never growled, never mind barked.

OVERLOOKED in the latest humiliation of the Department of Timidity & Incompetence — the collapse of the third successive insider trading prosecution against former "bucket shop" share dealer Jonathan Greenwood and his sister — is that this case stemmed from the investigation which almost put *Independent* journalist Jeremy Warner in prison.

The prosecution collapsed because the Office of Fair Trading, for which Greenwood's sister worked, refused to provide uncensored documents relating to six takeover situations in which Greenwood was alleged to have dealt aided by information about possible Monopolies Commission references.

Why the OFT should feel the public interest was better served by its own secrecy than successfully prosecuting an alleged insider dealer trading on information from within another part of the DTI is hard to understand. Especially when a number of senior judges, all the way to the law lords, were forcibly reminded of how important it was that Warner tell what he knew. Otherwise, their lordships were assured some serious bad guys (Greenwood was suspected of not trading alone on his alleged inside information) would escape justice.

Now we discover that justice was obstructed not by a journalist but by the OFT. Yet there was no attempt to threaten Sir Gordon Borrie with a swingeing fine or prison. Funny that!

MRS Thatcher's favourite PR man Tim Bell found himself red-faced as a result of Lowe Bell's role in supporting Norfolk Capital against raiders Balmoral International. Lowe Bell let it be known that one of Balmoral's backers was London-based Arab arms deal "fixer" Wafic Said, a man also not unknown in Thatcher circles. This was supposed to embarrass Balmoral who had at Said's request not revealed his involvement. What the Lowe Bell left hand did not seemingly realise was that the right hand, Bell personally, just happened to act for the same Wafic Said who was less than pleased to read about himself. Bell reportedly had a lot of explaining to do to the angry Arab. No doubt he made it clear that unfortunately Lowe Bell was to blame but that not everyone knew about their relationship.

CLIVE Mattock, executive deputy chairman of share dealers UTC, seems to have found himself in the middle of a number of interesting share deals concerning fast sinking financial groups Dominion International and City & Westminster Group (CWG). UTC handled investments made by Dominion's pension fund — in UTC clients. UTC sold more than half former Dominion chief executive Max Lewinsohn's shareholding — highly fortuitous as Dominion has since collapsed into effective receivership. And UTC was also involved in City & Westminster's purchase of a Dominion stake unrelated no doubt to Lewinsohn or UTC's trading book — shortly before dealings were suspended. UTC is clearly a firm investors can patronise with absolute confidence.

MEANWHILE others at CWG must explain to the DTI why certain somewhat material information was missing from last August's CWG prospectus. Of particular interest is why two "put" options on CWG shares costing £850,000 held by Leystan were omitted. CWG is still trying to get out from underneath those options. Also omitted was a deal to buy a stake in Aitken Hume which went through prior to the prospectus date but with settlement not due until afterwards. These shares were later sold. No doubt not just the DTI but also auditors Peat Marwick and lawyers Wilde Sapte will welcome explanations as to why these three deals were not worth mentioning.

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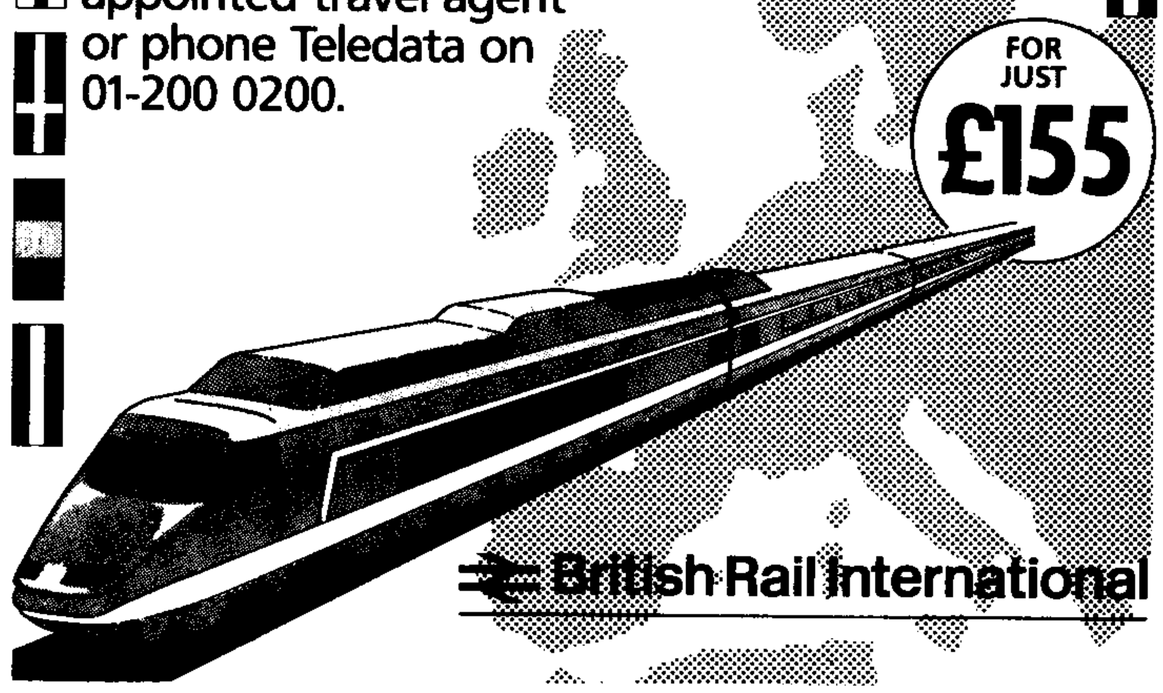

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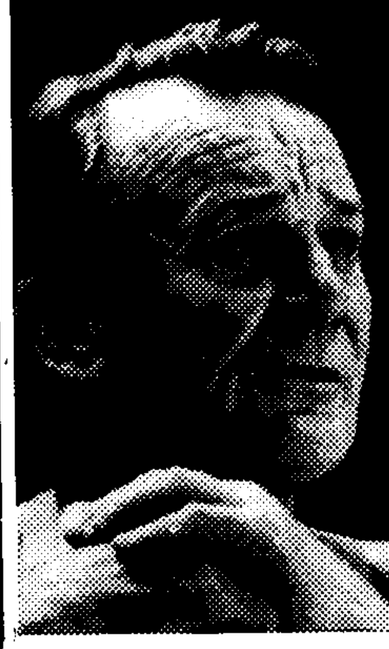

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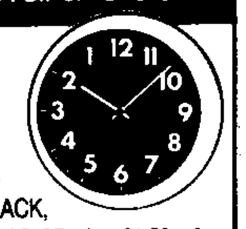

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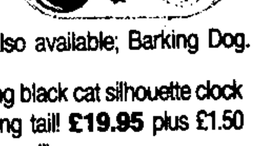

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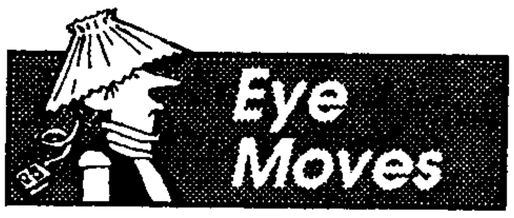

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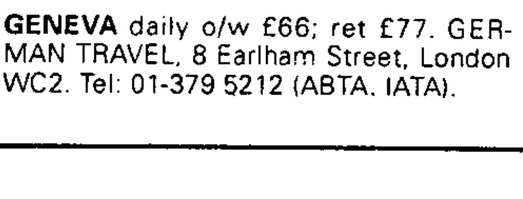

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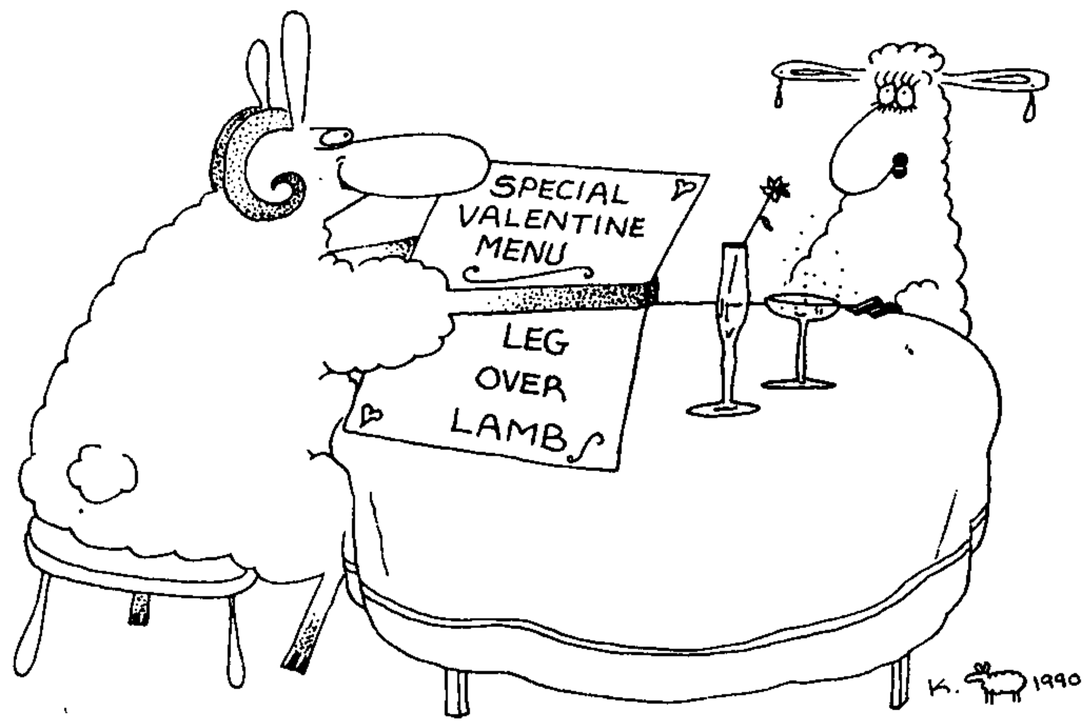

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MALE, 30, mature student solvent seeks intelligent, imaginative soulmate. Phone number please. Manchester N.W. Box 10834.

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PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME & ADDRESS ON THE BACK OF YOUR CHEQUE

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 34, personable, sporty, musical, tired of butterfly existence seeks sincere, witty, attractive lady 20-30 for long-term commitment, nest-building, etc. London area. Photo please. Box 11434.

AT LAST, an ad not written by an estate agent! Intelligent, attractive, caring male, 33, tall, slim, would like to meet interesting, capable, pretty female for long term relationship. No discretion required or expected. Box 11534.

PROFESSIONAL, independent woman in E/Midlands seeks similar male, 30s/early 40s to meet over dinner and see if we have the same view of life. Box 11634.

CHARLES AND ANDREW (20s, London) seek right royal pair. Cecil Beaton portrait appreciated. Box 11734.

CZECH LADY, attractive nurse, blonde, 28, would like to correspond with interesting, genuine male for serious overseas friendship. Czechoslovakia. Box 11834.

UNWANTED Christmas present (19). Seeks loving female for a Happy New Year. Photo essential. London. Box 11934.

BALDING Dudley Moore lookalike with trappings of success but currently demotivated. Needs kick start/taking in hand by a strong-minded, imaginative, loving, seriously funny female. View to long term joint venture. London/S.E. Box 12034.

GRACEFUL, educated lady, perceptive, discerning, seeks unattached gentleman, 58+. Box 12134.

SOCIALIST WOMAN, rare 1938 Northern edition, good condition, seeks male conamore. Offers sensuality/laughter, warmth. Box 12234.

NEW BOY IN TOWN 28 years, professional, sporty, not unattractive seeks stimulating cultured and attractive lady to help discover Glasgow. Photo please. Box 12334.

SUCCESSFUL, single high tech entrepreneur considering the enlightenment of exploring his emotions and senses worldwide with a bright young lady with lovely hair of about twenty — almost half his age. Box 12434.

AMERICAN WOMAN riding out early mid-life crisis in London seeks tender male companionship. I'm financially secure, changing career from writing promotions for lefty organisations to being real artist. Committed to staying in London for several years to finish art school and psychanalysis. London NW. Write me. ALA. Box 12534.

SPECIAL OFFER! Better than average, London-based, graduate, male (35), seeks intelligent young female for company, conversation and romance. Box 12634.

GRADUATE MALE, 37, seeks considerate, polite female to relieve him of his unwanted possessions. Box 12734.

WOMAN GRADUATE (33), lively, intelligent, independent, attractive, seeks stimulating, witty, non-Thatcherite professional male, early 30s for theatre, cinema good food/wine, friendship, possibly more. Photo appreciated. Hants/London. Box 12834.

WANTED attractive, tall, trim, aerobic-orientated lass (24-44) for educated, cultured well-preserved energetic eccentric, property developer entrepreneur! 54+ has much to offer for assistance, affection, loyalty, companionship, possibly share Berkshire country cottage, log fires, sports cars, holidays abroad, etc, etc. Children considered. SAE. Photo. ALA. Box 13234.

AM LOOKING FOR one of those beautiful younger women up to 44 who actually prefer older men because they are often more urbane, kind, responsible, experienced, unmortgaged, have their own yachts and can afford to spoil a worthwhile woman who likes countryside, sailing in Summer, travelling in-Europe in Autumn, tropics in Winter, dining out, firesides, dogs, etc. Am 60, 5'7", fit, energetic, adventurous, virile, have own business, live on south coast (Lymington) beside the water. My family are grown up and I would like a permanent, happy relationship with a woman who combines humour, honour and kindness with good looks and agility, likes sailing and doesn't smoke. Please write with photo to Box 13334.

PhD, 42, female, married, seeks (attached) male (40s). Must be highly intelligent and political. London. Box 12934.

BUILDER, HANDYMAN, 32, attractive, tied, seeks female to repair things, and keep in good order. London, Middx. Box 13034.

TWO ATTRACTIVE MALES (30ish) seek attractive females for no holes barred, non-plutonic relationship. Please send photos. Box 13134.

ALL IT TAKES is time. If you are a confident (but not brash), gorgeous (but not vain), well-adjusted woman who knows that Heidegger isn't an Australian greeting ... and if you relish the challenge of escorting a creative writer who looks like Henry VIII, Clement Freud and Bob Hoskins combined, then write now! Caring, listening man, very early forties, lapsed romantic, plans to make your investment in time and postage the best move you ever made. Chiswick ... anywhere! Box 20431.

ESCAPING to Southern France. Sophisticated English gentleman of great style (40s) — a thoroughly proper chap — announces his intention to flee the hassle and rat race to run holiday chateau. Seeks lady partner 30-40. Must be francophile, adventurous, charismatic and attractive. Photo appreciated. ALA. P.S. This is serious. Box 20631.

SENSUAL, generously feminine, curvaceous, very attractive, blonde, romantic, charming personality, 40s, seeks considerate, personable, affluent, N/S, successful gentleman 50+ for happy, lasting relationship. London S/E. Box 13434.

SUPPOSEDLY ELIGIBLE entrepreneur, childish 31, into self exploration, seeks similarly fascinating female. Box 13534.

ME: BACHELOR ARTIST (30), a loyal friend seeking genuine friendship. You: special lass (25-35), non-smoker, seeking someone like me. Photo appreciated. Box 13634.

PAULINE, we met at my house near Baker Street, January 7th. I do not have your telephone number. John. Box 13734.

GRADUATE HISTORIAN, seeks uninhibited, intelligent woman interested in lively correspondence. Box 13834.

SLIGHTLY UNHINGED 34 year old married male seeks lady of similar mentality for occasional bouts of total nonsense. Based Peterborough but mobile. Box 13934.

FEMALE GRADUATE, 47, slim, fair, stylish, seeks unattached, elegant Arab/Indian male 30s/40s for long relationship. West Midlands. Photo please. Box 14034.

QUIET, shy affectionate male (22) seeks intelligent, attractive and sensitive female. E. Anglia. Box 14134.

MALE, 38, tall, unattached, seeks warm, intelligent woman to share concerts, films, good food, wine, conversation and countryside. Cambridgeshire/East Anglia. Box 14234.

ANIMAL want woman. Leicester. Box 14334.

I WOULD LIKE a warm, intelligent lady (20-35) for friendship, music (Radio 3), films, food. London. Box 14434.

PROFESSIONAL MALE (45), married seeks similar female (30-45) for occasional wining, dining and sensual cuddles! W Midlands, Staffs or A23 corridor. Long letter plus photo appreciated. Box 14534.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, English, Glasgow-based, early 40s, seeks warm, sincere, slim, sexy female to brighten up his life. Box 14634.

YOUNG, single lawyer, male (31) seeks lady, North-West. Photo if possible. Box 14734.

VALENTINE MESSAGES BY FEBRUARY 5TH
(see p. 33)

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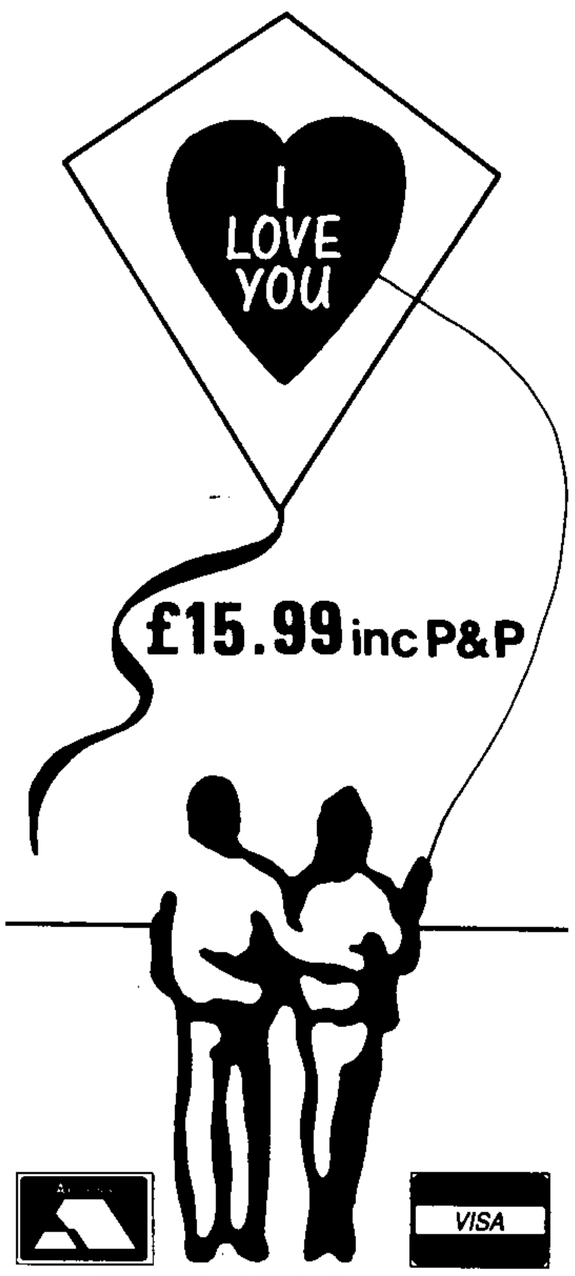

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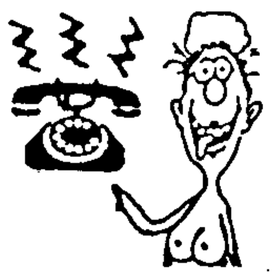

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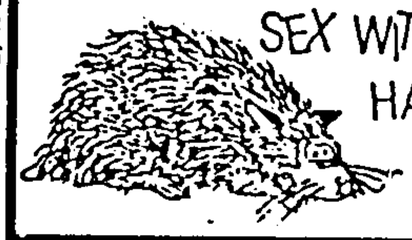

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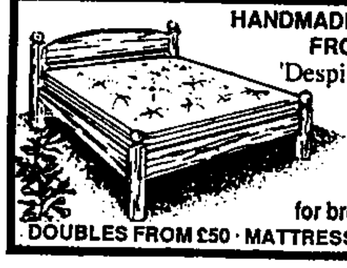

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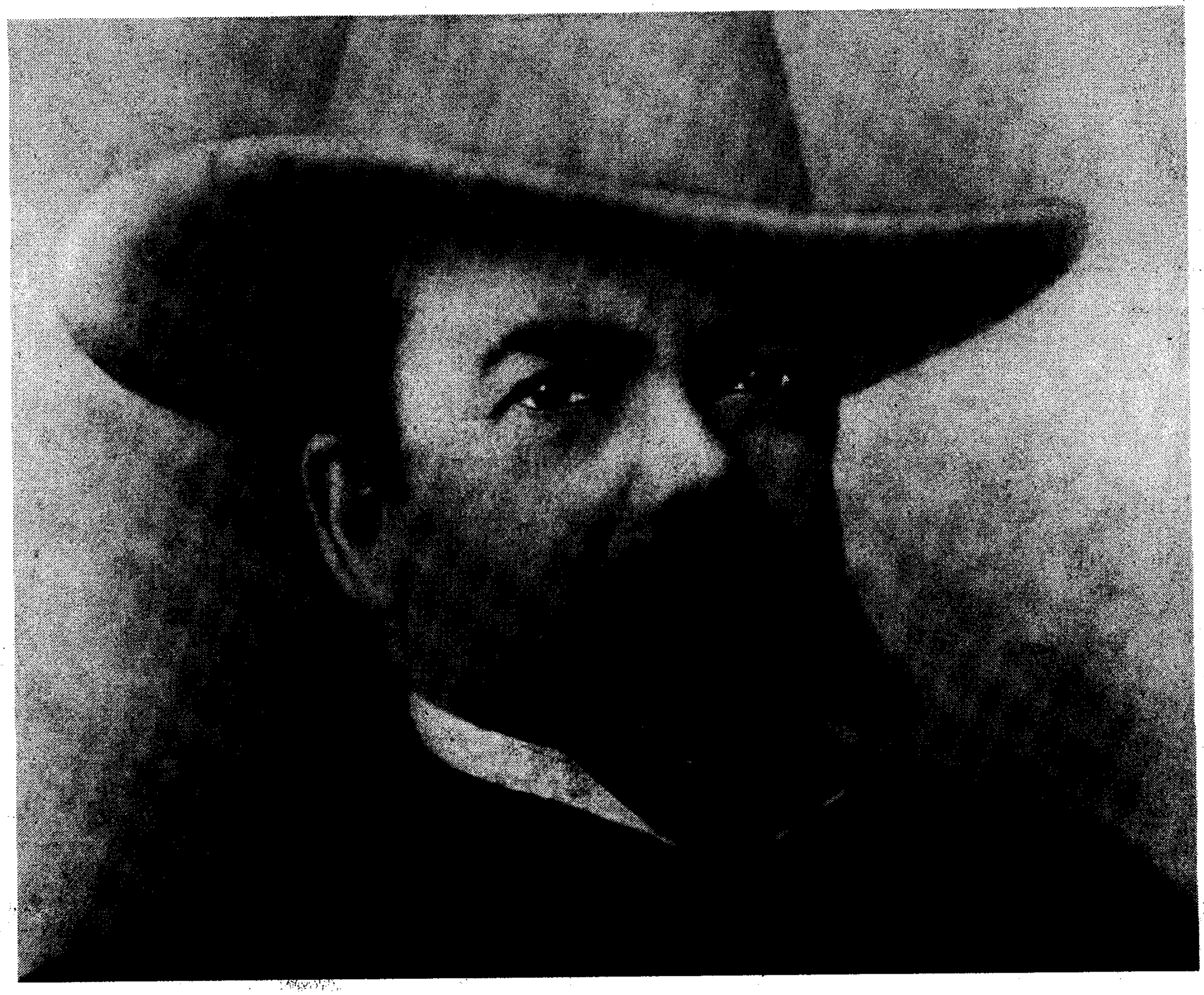

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